



*William Beveridge D.D.
Lord Bishop of St. Asaph
Ætatis sue 71.*



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THE GREAT
Necessity and Advantage
OF
PUBLICK PRAYER
AND
Frequent Communion;
Designed to revive
PRIMITIVE PIETY:
WITH

Meditations, Ejaculations, *and* Prayers, *before, at,*
and after the Sacrament.

The NINTH EDITION.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, ^K
Late Lord Bishop of St. *ASAPH.*

L O N D O N:

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T H E
P R E F A C E:

TH E two following Treatises, on the two great *Devotional Duties*, want no *Name* or *Authority* to set them off, whilst they bear that venerable one of Bishop *Beveridge* in the Front.

It must not, therefore, be thought the Business of this short Introduction, to press the *Frequency* of *publick Prayers*, or *Communion*, either as *necessary* or *advantageous* to Christians, when they have been so effectually recommended to the World, by that *eminent Prelate*, *Codex Can. Vind.* from *Pulpit* and *Press*, both else- *Lib. 2. Cap. 3.* where in the *Vulgar Tongue*. *Lib. 3. Cap. 10.*

What is thus *prefaced*, in short, is only to remind the *Reader*, that the *pious Author* confirm'd by his *Practice*, what he establish'd by his *Preaching*: And that from the Time he was constituted *Parish Priest*, in a * Place capable of such Improvement, till by the good Providence of God, he was advanced to a higher Station in the Church; 'twas the Desire and Delight of his Soul, to render his Congregation a Pattern to others, for their stedfast Conti-

nuance

The P R E F A C E.

nuance in the *Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, in breaking of Bread, and of Prayer.*

“ How happy, said he, (upon his Entrance on
“ this good Work) should I think myself, if it
“ would please God to make me the unworthiest of
“ his Servants, an Instrument in his Almighty Hand,
“ towards the effecting of it in this Place?” But
his Endeavours stopp’d not there: For besides the
Example he hath given in singular Instances of
Fidelity and *Diligence* in his Holy Calling, (which
we trust in God, will be influential on many of
the *Clergy* in this City and Kingdom, who shall
be industrious to revive amongst us, *primitive Pi-*
ety, and *Purity*, truly so called;) he left the main
of his Estate at his Decease, for the Propagation
of the *Gospel*, and promoting of *Christian Know-*
ledge, in this Manner, at Home, as well as Abroad.

To the *Curacy* of *Mount Sorrel*, in particular,
and *Vicarage* of *Barrow*, in the County of *Lei-*
cester, in a thankful Remembrance of God’s Mer-
cies vouchsafed to him thereabouts, he bequeaths
a plentiful Accession for ever, on Condition that
Prayers be read *Morning* and *Evening* every Day,
according to the *Liturgy* of the *Church of England*,
in the *Chapel* and *Parish Church* aforelaid; with a
certain Sum to be divided equally upon the Eve
of our blessed Saviour’s Nativity, amongst Six
poor House-keepers of *Barrow*, as the Minister
and Church-wardens should agree; Regard being
had especially to those who had been most con-
stantly at *Prayers*, and at the *Sacrament* of the
Lord’s Supper the foregoing Years. “ And if it
“ shall so happen, (which GOD forbid!) that the
“ *Common Prayer* cannot be read in the Church

“ or

The P R E F A C E.

* or Chapel aforefaid, my Will is, (faith this good
“ Father of our Church *) That * See the Will.
“ what ſhould have been given in
“ either Place for that, be in each Place allowed
“ to one, choſen by the Vicar of *Barrow*, to
“ teach School, and inſtruct the Youth in the
“ Principles of the Chriſtian Religion, according
“ to the Doctrines of the Church of England.”

Go thou, Reader, and do likewise, as thy Circumſtances will permit.

If thou art ſent a Preacher into the Church of GOD, ſee that no Man deſpiſe thee, or the Offerings of the Lord, by thy careleſs Neglect or ſuperficial Performance of theſe Duties. Be inſtant in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, and be a ſhining Example, that thou loſe none of the Souls committed to thy Charge.

If otherwiſe, tho’ thou ſhouldeſt even occupy the Place of the unlearned in the Church, thou may’ſt yet gain ſome to Chriſt, by putting this little Book into the Hands of many, according to thy Ability.

And the Bleſſing of GOD, of his Spouſe the Church, and of the Souls that are ready to periſh for Want of this Spiritual Food, be upon thee, and thine!

N. B. The additional Devotions. Uſe them, or others, already prepared for thee: But, as thou valueſt thy Soul, be perſuaded, by the Book, to be a conſtant Communicant.

T H E



THE
CONTENTS
OF THE GREAT
Necessity and Advantage
OF
PUBLICK PRAYER.

P RAYER an Acknowledgment of our Dependence upon God	Page 1
Gives us a Title to God's Protection	2
Ought to be constant	ibid.
Either Vocal or Mental	ibid.
Not only constant, but regular	3
In the Evening, Morning, and at Noon especially	ibid.
The Primitive Christians made frequent Prayers in private	4
In publick had their Morning and Evening Service at our 9 and 3, their 3d and 9th Hours	ibid.
Publick Worship frequented by the first and beloved Disciples	5
At the established Time and Place	ibid.
The Places of God's Worship Holy, whether Tabernacle, Tem- ple, Church, or Chapel	6
Because they are God's Houses	ibid.
Houses of Prayer	ibid.
And of Blessing	7
God's House zealously loved and frequented by King David	ibid.
The Prophet Daniel	8
Anna the Prophetess	ibid.
Just and devout Simeon	ibid.
The Blessed Jesus	ibid.
All the Disciples	9
	S. Paul

The CONTENTS.

S. Paul	ibid.
S. Peter and S. John	ibid.
These Examples are an Admonition to us to love and frequent our Churches	ibid.
The Houses of God's special Residence	10
(An Argument for publick Baptism)	ibid.
Where the faithful are assisted	ibid.
And their Services accepted	11
The Tabernacle, Temple and Synagogues heretofore, as Churches or Chapels now, the most proper Places for Prayers	12
The Word Church signifying the Lord's House	15
Hours of Prayer amongst the Jews were our 9 th and 3 rd , their 3 ^d and 9 th Hours	16
Because the Bloody Sacrifices were then offered, as Types of the Lamb of God, whose Sufferings began and ended with those Hours	17
And because the Holy Incense was then burnt as a Type of Christ's Intercession	18
Hours of Prayer the same in the Country Synagogue as in the Temple	20
That all the Jews might hold Communion with the Church at Jerusalem	ibid.
And in the Sacrifices and Incense then offered	ibid.
S. Peter and S. John went to the Temple at 3, as to a House of Prayer	21
Because Christ's Death was thenceforward to be commemorated by the Christian Sacrifice	ibid.
Hence the Christian Church derived its Morning and Evening Service	22
The Church of <i>England</i> conformable to the <i>Catholick Church</i> , in her Hours of Prayer	ibid.
Every Minister bound to say Morning and Evening Prayer every Day, either in a Church or Chapel, or in his own House	23
Every Parish Priest is oblig'd to say Prayers in the Church or Chapel Morning and Evening every Day	ibid.
And the Bishop to see that he doth his Duty	24
So that all in the Church of <i>England</i> may pray publicly every Day	ibid.
The Neglect of this, chargeable upon Priest or People	25
Upon the Clergy	26
Upon the Laity	ibid.
The frivolous Pretences of the Laity for neglecting Prayers	ibid.
Hopes of a Reformation in this particular, from the following Considerations	27
1. The Excellency and Usefulness of the Common Prayer itself	28
(See the Bishop's Sermon of the Excellency and Usefulness of the Common Prayer	ibid.
2. God's	

The CONTENTS.

2. God's Command to the <i>Israelites</i> for publick Devotion twice a Day	29
The publick Devotions of the <i>Jews</i> were Moral and Levitical	31
The Moral Part the most regarded even amongst the <i>Jews</i>	ibid.
No less ought it to be amongst <i>Christians</i>	32
Nay, the <i>Christian</i> Sacrifice is more acceptable to God than the <i>Jewish</i>	33
3. The Lord's Prayer a strong Argument for constant publick Prayer	34
4. As well as the practice of the Apostles	35
5. Natural Reason calls for daily publick Prayer and Praise	36
<i>Christians</i> bound to excel all others in the pious Performance of publick Devotions for the Honour of Christ	38
Else <i>Mahometans</i> and <i>Jews</i> will rise up in Judgment against them	ibid.
The Advantages of Prayer	41
As well pleasing to God	ibid.
Especially of publick Prayers	ibid.
God's promises to them	ibid.
Hence publick Prayers preferred before private	42
God's acceptance of publick Prayer, or even Prayers made at the publick Hour	43
Publick Prayer advantageous to Church and State	45
Unless God be highly incens'd against a People	46
And even then his Care is particular for devout Persons	47
Publick or Common Prayer advantageous to <i>Christians</i> in their private Capacities	48
How	ibid.
Why the Service of God is thought unprofitable to Men	50
Because Men think the Benefits of it respect not this World	51
The Pretences examined, which are usually assign'd for the Neg- lect of publick Devotions	52
1. Willfulness	ibid.
2. Disrelish	ibid.
For want of Edification	53
Confused by Arguments against extempore Prayer	ibid.
Especially from our Saviour's Promise to them who pray at all	ibid.
The Condition of which is observed in the Church of <i>England</i>	54
And argues not only the Lawfulness, but the Necessity of Set Forms in publick Worship	55
3. Daily Use of private Prayer	ibid.
From St <i>Matth.</i> vi. 5, 6. misunderstood	56
4. Observation of the Lord's Day	58
5. Want of Time	59
Answered by a few Consideration'	60
6. Loss	

The CONTENTS.

6. Loss of temporal Things	62
7. Want of Edification	68
Answered by an Account of the Manner how we are to perform the publick Devotions	ibid.
And what is the true religious Worship	72 and 73
Rules for worshipping God aright in the Church or House of God	75
Ejaculations in going thither	ibid.
In the Church	ibid.
Devout Behaviour	ibid.
At the hearing the Sentences	76
Reading the Exhortation	ibid.
During the Confession	ibid.
On receiving Absolution	ibid.
While the Psalms or Hymns are repeating	77
The Chapters read	ibid.
The Prayers offered	ibid.
The Blessing given	78
And after the Blessing	ibid.
A willing Mind a great Help to true Devotion	79
And a vicious Life the greatest Disservice thereto	80
Exhortation to all the Members of the Church of <i>England</i> , that they live as holily as they pray devoutly	81



THE



THE CONTENTS

OF THE GREAT Necessity and Advantage

OF Frequent COMMUNION.

T HE Commemoration of the Death of Christ	Page 84
The End of this Holy Institution of the Sacrament, the Communion, the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, as 'tis diversly styled	85
I. Hence Christ's Death is declared at every Administration thereof	86
II. Christ's Death is not repeated, but shew'd forth in every Administration	ibid.
III. The Commemoration of Christ's Death is not Temporary, but to be perpetual	87
IV. The Commemoration of Christ's Death is not only to be continued, but often repeated	88
Complaint of the general Neglect of the Holy Sacrament	89
The Folly and Ingratitude of such Neglect	90
Reasons why Christians ought to receive often	ibid.
I. 'Tis Christ's own Institution and Command	91
Not to be dispensed with	92
How the Apostles and Primitive Christians understood the Word <i>often</i> in the Institution of the Sacrament	93
That it should be administred and received constantly every Lord's Day, if not usually every Day in the Week	95
To which their Practice was conformable	96
And is a standing Rebuke to us at this Day, who neglect an Ordinance of so great Consequence to Christians	98
II. As the <i>Jews</i> had the Death of Christ typified under the Law every Day by divers Representations	ibid.

The CONTENTS.

So <i>Christians</i> should be much more punctual and constant in commemorating that one <i>Sacrifice</i> by this <i>Sacrament</i>	101
As the best Means of exercising our Faith in Christ	102
And applying his Merits to ourselves	105
Meditations on the Sacrament	106
Hence receiving the Sacrament is both our Interest and our Duty	107
'Tis our <i>Interest</i> , as it comforts us with Hopes of Pardon	109
Affords us Spiritual Strength for Perseverance in doing well	112
Is of great Advantage, and necessary for us on many o- ther Accounts	114
The little Effect good Arguments have on most, as to this particular	116
The Influence of the Holy Sacrament in better Times	ibid.
Till Disputes enervated Piety	117
And Indifferency in Religion succeeded	118
And many Pretences at length alledged against receiving, though vain and trifling ones	ibid.
Nothing really obstructing but Love to Sin	119
'Tis our Duty to receive oftener than three Times in a Year	ibid.

OBJECTIONS Answer'd.

I. From the Rubrick against frequent Communion	120
The Sense of our Church about frequent Communion heretofore	ibid
It should be daily administred in Cathedrals	ibid
And even in Parish Churches	121
At least on Sundays and Holy Day	ibid
The same Obligation now to daily Communion, as at the Be- ginning of the Reformation	125
Reading the Ante Communion Service upbraids the People with their Neglect of the Sacrament	129
Every Parishioner bound to receive three Times a Year at least, under Pain of Excommunication	131
The receiving the Sacrament so often as the Church re- quires, the best Characteristick of a Disciple of Christ	133
And a true Member of the Church	134
The Want of a sufficient Number of Communicants, the only Reason to justify the Omission of frequent Commu- nion, i. e. daily, or Weekly at least	135
An Eulogy of the Church of England in behalf of this Doctrine	ibid
II. Unworthiness	136
Examination of this second Objection against frequent Com- munion	137
Raised from the Context	ibid
On the Corinthians unworthy receiving	138
Where the Word Damnation signifies temporal Judgments not Eternal Damnation	140
The	

The CONTENTS.

The full Scope of the Apostle here summed up	144
III. Want of Leisure, a great Reason why Men do not often communicate	145
This Reason canvassed	147
Some have no Cause to make it	ibid
Others very little from worldly Business	148
On Account of which 'tis not to be deferred	150
IV. Want of due Preparation	152
What Preparation makes a worthy Communicant	153
1. A right Knowledge of the Nature and End of the Institution	ibid
2. A due Examination of ourselves, as to Faith, Repentance, and Charity	154
These Qualifications are never wanting to Dispositions habitually good	157
And both may, and must be acquired by Christians of a lower Class	158
This Preparation not difficult	ibid
Because Self Examination is necessary at other Times, as well as when we receive	161
V. Want of Improvement under the Use of these Means, another Objection against frequent Communion	162
How the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ operates upon, and improves us	163
When it has not that good Effect, 'tis the Fault of the Man, not of the Institution	165
The Remedy is at Hand	166
1. Right Preparation	ibid
2. Receiving aright	167
By actual Faith in the Mystery	168
The Excellency of our Communion Service for obtaining the End of that Ordinance exemplified	170
In the Use of the Lord's Prayer at the Holy Table	171
The particular Prayer before the Commandments	ibid
The Reading of the Commandments themselves	ibid
The Collects for the King and the Day	172
The Epistle	173
The Gospel read standing	ibid
The Nicene Creed standing likewise	174
The Homily or Sermon	175
The Offertory	ibid
The Prayer for Christ's Church Militant	ibid
To be read upon Sundays and Holy Days, tho' there are not Communicants enough	176
And to be read at the Communion Table	178
That so the People may be reminded of their Duty, and upbraided with their Neglect of it	179
The Exhortation	ibid
The Invitation	180
	The

The CONTENTS.

The Confession	181
The Absolution	182
The Sentences	ibid
The Lauds and Anthems	185
The Preface	186
The Prayer of Consecration	ibid
The actual Receiving	190
Upon our Knees	191
Ejaculations and Resolutions after the Communion	193
The proper Hymn	195
The Blessing	196
Exhortation to frequent Communion, from the Benefit and Comfort of it	197

The Contents of the private Devotions.

D EVOTIONS Preparatory to the Holy Sacrament, or on any Day of Humiliation	200
---	-----

At the Administration of the Holy Communion, viz.

B EFORE going to the Altar	202
At going to the Altar	203
At prostrating before the Altar	ibid
Whilst others are coming up, and the Priest preparing to read the Sentences	ibid
At the Offertory	204
At the Consecration	205
Whilst the Priest and others are communicating	ibid
When the Priest draws near with the Elements	ibid
Immediately before receiving the Holy Bread	206
At the Eating of the Holy Bread	ibid
After receiving	ibid
Before receiving the Cup	207
Upon the Approach of the Priest with the consecrated Cup	208
After receiving the Cup	ibid
After receiving in both Kinds	209
At the End of the Communion.	210

T H E

THE GREAT
Necessity and Advantage
OF
PUBLICK PRAYER.

ACTS iii, 1.

Now Peter and John went up together into the Temple, at the Hour of Prayer, being the Ninth Hour.

FROM your Presence here at this Time and Place, dedicated to the Service of the Most High GOD, I cannot but in Charity conclude, that you all believe that he governs the World, and disposes all Things in it, according to his own Will and Pleasure: That it is in him you live, and move, and have your Being: That you neither have, nor can have any Thing but what you receive from him, and that you are therefore come hither now on Purpose to acknowledge his Goodness to you in what you have, and to pray unto him for what you want. And verily ye do well to take all the Opportunities that ye can get to do so; for this is the Way to continue in his Love and Favour, and to live always under his Care

B

Prayer an Acknowledgment of our Dependence upon God.
and

and Protection. But for that Purpose ye must not Gives us a Title to think it enough to pray to, and to God's Protection. praise him only now and then, when ye have nothing else to do; but this should be your daily Business, the constant Employment of your Lives. He himself commands you by his Apostle, 'To pray without ceasing,' 1 *Thes.* v.

Ought to be
constant.

7. and to 'pray always, or at all Times, with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and to watch thereunto 'with all Perseverance,' *Eph.* iv. 18. Not as if ye should do nothing else but pray; but that Prayer should run through, and accompany every Thing else ye do, so as to begin, continue, and end all your Actions with praying to, and praising God for his Direction and Assistance; tho' not always with your Mouths, yet howsoever in your Hearts,

Either Vocal or by lifting them up unto him, as any Mental.

Man may do in the Midst of other Business. Thus *David* praised God seven times a Day. 'Seven Times a Day do I praise thee, saith he, because of thy righteous Judgments,' *Psal.* cxix. 164. Not that he never did it oftner, but this was the least he ever did it. For being a Man after God's own Heart, his Heart was always running upon God, and praying to him; and that too, not only in his Mind, but with his Mouth also, 'I will bless the Lord, saith he, at all Times, his Praise shall continually be in my Mouth,' *Psal.* xxxiv. 1. 'And my Tongue shall speak of thy Righteousness, and of thy Praise all the Day long,' xxxv. 28. Thus all that would live a truly pious and divine Life, must keep their Hearts always fixed upon God, admiring his Goodness, magnifying

magnifying his Power, and imploring his Grace and Mercy, not only every Day, but every Hour of the Day, at all Times, upon all Occasions that offer themselves, as some or other do continually.

But besides our thus praying to, and praising God in the midst of other Business, we ought to set apart some certain Times in every Day wholly for this. The Saints of old were wont Not only constant, but regular. to do it three times a Day, as we learn from *Daniel*. For when King *Darius* had signed the Decree, 'That whosoever should ask a
' Petition of any God or Man for thirty Days, except of the King, should be cast into the Den of
' Lions, *it is written, That when Daniel knew*
' that the Decree was signed, he went into his
' House, and his Windows being open in his
' Chamber towards *Jerusalem*, he kneeled upon
' his Knees three Times a Day, and prayed, and
' gave Thanks unto his God, as he did aforetime,' *Dan. vi. 10. As he did aforetime*; which shews that this had been his constant Practice before, and he would not leave it off now, though he was sure to be cast into the Den of Lions for it. But what Times of the Day these were, which were anciently devoted to this religious Purpose, we may best gather from King *David*, where he saith, 'Evening, and Morning, In the Evening, Morning and at Noon especially.
' and at Noon will I pray, and cry
' aloud, and he shall hear my Voice,' *Psal. lv. 17.* He begins with the Evening, because Day then began, according to the *Jewish* Account; but he observed all these Times of Prayer alike. And so questionless did other devout People as well as he. The *Jews* have a Tradition, that those Times were

ordain'd to that Use, the Morning by *Abraham*, Noon by *Isaac*, and Evening by *Jacob*. But whether they have any Ground for that or no, be sure this Custom is so reasonable and pious, that the Church of Christ took it up and observed it all along from the very Beginning. Only to distinguish these Times more exactly, the Christians called them (as the *Jews* had done before) by the Name of the *Third*, the *Sixth*, and the *Ninth* Hours. Of which *Tertullian* saith, *Tres istas Horas ut insigniores in Rebus humanis, ita & solenniores fuisse in Orationibus divinis*, as they were more famous than others in human Affairs, so they were more solemn in Divine Prayers. *Tert. de Jejun. c. 10.*

I know the Primitive Christians perform'd their Private Devotions at other Times as well as these; but at these set Times every Day especially at the *Third* and *Ninth* Hours, they always performed them *publickly*, if they could get an Opportunity. And if we would be such Christians as they were, we must follow their pious Example in this, as well as in other Things.

The Primitive Christians made frequent Prayers in private.

In publick had their Morning and Evening Service at our 9 and 3, their 3d and 9th Hours.

This therefore is that, which, by God's Assistance, I would now persuade you all to, and for that Purpose have chose these Words for the Subject of my present Discourse, as setting before you the Example of two of Christ's own Apostles in it, *St. Peter* and *St. John*, of whom it is here said, *That they went up together into the Temple at the Hour of Prayer, being the ninth Hour.*

The

The Holy Spirit of God, by his *Amanuens* St. *Luke*, is here about to describe a great Miracle wrought upon a Man who was above forty Years old, and had been Lame from his Mother's Womb, whom St. *Peter* made perfectly sound and whole, only by saying, *In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.* And he begins it with telling us, *That Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the Hour of Prayer.* But what is this to the Purpose? Would it not have been sufficient to have described this, as he usually doth other Miracles, without such minute Circumstances of Time and Place? Yes certainly it would have been so: And therefore I can see no Reason why this should be recorded, but only to teach us, that tho' the *Levitical* Law expired together with our Saviour, yet the publick Worship of God ought to be kept up at certain Times and Places, set apart for it. For here we see two great Apostles, the one called the *First*, Publick Worship frequented by the First and beloved Disciples. the other the *Beloved* Disciple; these two, when endued with a more than ordinary Measure of the Holy Ghost, did not think it enough to pray at *Home*, or together with their Brethren, in any *Private* House; but they went to the *Place* that was dedicated to the *publick Worship* of God, and at the *Time* when that *Worship* was then performed. And this is left upon Record, that Christians of all Ages may At the established Time and Place. know it, and learn by their Apostolical Example to lay hold on all Opportunities they can get, of performing their *publick Devotions* to Almighty God in such Places, and at such Times as are appointed for that Purpose.

For

For our better Understanding of this, we shall consider two Things: First, the *Place* whither these Apostles went, they went *up to the Temple*; and then the *Time* when, they went *at the Hour of Prayer*, being *the Ninth Hour*.

First, they went up into the *Temple*, *eis to ieròn* to the *Holy Place*, as the Word signifies, to the Place dedicated to *Holy Uses*, to the Service of the most *Holy God*. Such Places God always had upon Earth, and he always looked upon them as his own in a peculiar Manner. Tho' *the Earth* be *the Lord's and the Fulness thereof*, or, every Thing that is in it: Yet when any Part of it is solemnly devoted to him, and to the Worship of his *Holy Name*; he takes Possession of it for himself, as he did in a visible Manner, both of the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*.

And from that Time forward, he hath a new Kind of Propriety in such Places, distinct from that which he had before, and reckons them his *own* in

Because they are a more special Sense than other Places God's Houses.

are. He himself, as well as others, call them his; as where he saith, 'In that ye have brought into my Sanctuary Strangers, uncircumcised in Heart and Flesh, to be in my Sanctuary, to pollute it, even my House,' *Ezek. xlv. 7.*

Houses of Prayer. 'My House shall be called an House of Prayer,' *Isa. lvi. 7.*

And so he frequently saith, 'That this House was called by his Name, or, his Name was called upon it,' as *Jer. vii. 10. xi. 14.* And in all Places thus dedicated to him, and called by his Name, he himself has promised that he will be present in a special

Manner

Manner to bestow his Blessings upon those who there sincerely call upon him. ' In all Places, *saith he*, where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee,' *Exod. xx. 24.* The Truth of which gracious Promise God's faithful People have had Experience of in all Ages: And therefore always accounted it to be their Interest as well as Duty, to frequent such Places as often as they could. As we see in *David*, a Man after God's own Heart. What Pleasure did he take in going to the *House* of God? ' I was glad, *saith he*, when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord,' *Psal. cxxii. 1.* How happy did he esteem those who could be *always* there? ' Blessed is the Man, *said he to God*, whom thou chusest and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts, he shall be satisfied with the Goodness of thy House, even of thy Holy Temple,' *Psal. lxxv. 4.* How doth he long to communicate with them in it? ' How amiable, *saith he*, are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, my Heart and my Flesh cryeth out for the living God,' *Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 2.* How doth he envy the very Birds that come into the *House* of God, when he himself, being then in Exile, could not; ' Yea, the Sparrow, *saith he*, hath found her an House, and the Swallow a Nest, where she may lay her Young, even thine Altars, O Lord of Hosts! My King and my God,' *v. 3.* How doth he prefer this before all the Pleasures of the World besides: ' For a Day in thy

And of Blessing.

God's House zealously lov'd and frequented by King David.

‘thy Courts, *saiſt he*, is better than a thouſand: I
 ‘had rather be a Door-keeper in the Houſe of
 ‘my God, than to dwell in the Tents of Wicked-
 ‘neſs,’ *v. 10.* There are many ſuch Places in the
Pſalms, which ſhew the great Love and Honour
 he had for the Houſe of God, and the extraordinary
 Comfort and Delight that he uſed to find
 there.

Thus alſo *Daniel*, when he was at *Babylon*, al-
 tho’ the Houſe of God was then de-
 ſtroyed, and not yet rebuilt, yet in
 his daily Devotions *he opened the Windows of his*
Chamber toward Jeruſalem, *Dan. vi. 30.* that he
 might look at leaſt towards the Place where the
 Houſe of God once ſtood, and ſo expreſſed his
 earneſt Deſire to *Worſhip* God there, and his
 Faith in the Promiſes which God had made to
 thoſe who did ſo, and by that Means, when he
 could not poſſibly do it any other Way, he made his
private Devotions in a manner *publick*, joining in
 his Soul, with the whole Church of God in his
 publick Worſhip, when he could not do it in his
 Body.

But not to mention any more of the many In-
 ſtances of this kind in the Old Teſtament, in the
Anna the Pro- New it is written, ‘That *Anna the*
phetefs. ‘Prophetefs departed not from the
 ‘Temple, but feared God with Fasting and
 ‘Prayers Night and Day,’ *Luke ii. 37.* It is
Juſt and devout written, ‘That *Old Simeon*, that
Simeon. ‘*Juſt* and *Devout* Man, came by
 ‘the Spirit into the Temple,’ *v. 27.* It is writ-
The Bleſſed ten, ‘That *Jeſus* himſelf went into
Jeſus. ‘the Temple, and began to caſt out
 ‘them

‘ them that sold therein, and them that bought,
 ‘ saying unto them, “ It is written, my House is
 “ the House of Prayer, but ye have made it a
 “ Den of Thieves.” And he taught daily in the
 ‘ Temple,’ *Luke* xix. 45, 46, 47. It is written
 of the Apostles, ‘ That when they All the Dis-
 ‘ had seen Christ ascend to Heaven, ciples.
 ‘ they worshipped him, and returned to *Jerusalem*
 ‘ with great Joy, and were continually in the
 ‘ Temple praising and blessing God.’ *Luke* xxiv.
 52, 53. It is written of all the Disciples, ‘ That
 ‘ they continuing daily in the Temple, and break-
 ‘ ing Bread from House to House, did eat their
 ‘ Meat with Gladness and Singleness of Heart,
 ‘ praising God, and having Favour with all the
 ‘ People.’ *Acts* ii. 46, 47. It is written particu-
 larly of St. *Paul*, ‘ That when he St. Paul.
 ‘ was come to *Jerusalem*, even while
 ‘ he was praying in the Temple, he was in a
 ‘ Trance.’ *Acts* xxii. 17. And it is St. Peter and
 written here of St. *Peter* and St. *John*.
John, That they went up together into the Temple,
 at the Hour of Prayer.

But wherefore are these things written, but for
 our Admonition? to teach us, that it is God’s Will
 and Pleasure that we should perform
 publick Devotions to him, in Places
 dedicated to his Service, and set apart
 wholly for that Purpose. Such as
 the Temple was at *Jerusalem*, which
 therefore was called a *House of Prayer* by God
 himself, *Isa*. lvi. 7. *Luke* xix. 46. ‘ Yea, his
 ‘ House of Prayer. And I will make them joyful,
 ‘ saith he, in my House of Prayer.’ *Isa*. lvi. 7.

These Examples
 are an Admoniti-
 on to us to love,
 and frequent our
 Churches.

which plainly shews, both that *Prayer* was the most proper Work of *that House*, and also *that House* the most proper Place for *Prayer*; as being his own House, where he himself was pleased in a more especial Manner to reside, and

The Houses of
God's special Re-
sidence.

to distribute his Blessings among those who there prayed unto him for them. 'Hence whatsoever is done in this House, is said to be done before God, as there specially present.' *Eccl. v. 1, 2. Jer. vii. 10, &c.* And when our blessed Lord in his Infancy was brought to the *Temple*, it is said, 'They brought him thither to present him unto the Lord.' *Luke ii. 22.* Where we may observe by the Way, that (An Argument for this one Place of Scripture duly considered would be sufficient to persuade all Christian Parents to have their Children baptized, not in their *own*, but in *God's House*, that they may be there presented to the Lord, as Christ was, and so receive his Blessing, according to the Prayers which are there made for them in *God's own House*, in his *House of Prayer*, where he himself hath promised to meet with them, and to bless them.' *Exod. xx. 24.* By Vertue of which Promise the People of God in all Ages have found their *common* and *publick* Prayers to be most effectual.

There they have greater *Assistances* of God's Holy Spirit, stronger Assurances of his Love and Favour to them, a clearer Sight of his Glory and Goodness, and a deeper Sense of his *special Presence* with them, grounded upon their Belief of that remarkable Saying of our blessed Saviour, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the
: midst

‘ midst of them.’ *Matt.* xviii. 20. He doth not only promise that he will be *there*, but he positively asserts that he will be *there*, in the *midst* of them; which they who meet together in his Name, cannot but believe, with such a Faith, *as is the Evidence of things not seen*, *Heb.* xi. 1. and therefore by it they see him there as really as they see themselves, or one another. And this is that which makes them so desirous of being in *such Places*; as we see in *David*, saying, ‘ O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth after thee in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is, to see thy Power and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.’ *Psal.* lxxiii. 1, 2. It seems he had seen God in the Sanctuary, or *Holy Place* before, and therefore longs to go thither again, not doubting but if he was there, he should see God again, as he used to do. And so do all his faithful People. They see him there by Faith in his Word; they see him by the Light of his Countenance, which he lifts up there upon them: They see him shining forth in his Glory, And their Services accepted, and manifesting himself and his vices accepted, Goodness to them, in *bearing the Prayers*, and *accepting the Praises* they offer to him in his Name, who is in the midst of them, and hath promised, that *whatsoever they shall ask the Father in his Name, he will give it*, *John* xvi. 23.

These Things, I confess, may seem strange to some, especially to such as have not made trial of them: but they who have accustomed themselves to perform their *publick Devotions* to Almighty God, with that Intention of Mind, with that Ear-

nestness of Desire, with that Faith, with that Reverence and Humility, as they ought; they know that all which I have said comes far short of what they sometimes experience. Be sure, it was not for nothing, that the Apostles in my Text went up to the *Temple at the Hour of Prayer* to pray there, as all the devout People that dwelt thereabout were wont to do; and they also that would but seem to be so; as appears from our Saviour's Parable, where he saith, 'Two Men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican.' *Luke xviii. 10.* For this shews that not only they, but Christ himself, esteemed *that* the most proper Place for Prayer.

I say the *most*, not the *only proper* Place. It was

The Tabernacle, Temple, and Synagogues heretofore, as Churches or Chapels now the most proper Places for Prayers.

at the *Temple* only, that all the Sacrifices were offered, which typified and represented the Death of Christ, by whom alone our Prayers are heard, and our Duties accepted. And therefore that was the most proper Place for all that liv'd near it, and could go thither to perform their daily Devotions, because there they had the most sensible Occasions given for the Exercise of their Faith in Christ, there typically represented before their Eyes, as dying for their Sins, and as making Intercession for them, with the Incense of his own Merits. But nevertheless there were many *other* Places appointed for *publick* Prayers, which were called *Synagogues*. There were reckoned at one Time above four Hundred in *Jerusalem* itself, and several others in every City of *Judea*, and wheresoever else any *Jews* dwelt; so that in every Place where there were *Ten* considerable

Jews together, they were bound to have a *Synagogue*; which were therefore as so many Parish Churches, belonging to the *Temple*, as the *Cathedral*; or rather they were as our *Chapels of Ease*, to the *Mother-Church*. For as there are many *Parishes* in *England*, where there are several *Chapels of Ease*, where People may perform their *publick* Prayers, but they are bound to go to the *Mother-Church* to receive the Holy Sacrament: So notwithstanding the many *Synagogues*, which they had in all the Parts of their Kingdom, the *Jews* were to offer their Sacrifices only at the *Temple*. And therefore that was properly the *Metropolitanical*, or *Mother-Church*: And all the *Synagogues*, far and near, were Members of that; and as such, were *Houses of God*, and *Houses of Prayer*, as that was: And the Prayers which were made in *them* were as acceptable to God, as those which were made in the *Temple* itself.

There were such Places as these in *David's* Time: For he speaking prophetically of the Destruction of that Nation, saith, 'They have burnt up all the *Synagogues*, or *Houses of God* in the Land,' *Psal.* lxxiv. 8. To the same Purpose is that of the Prophet *Jeremiah*. 'He hath violently taken away his *Tabernacle*, as if it were a Garden; he hath destroyed his Places of the Assembly,' *Lam.* ii. 6. In both which Places we see God's Propriety asserted in these *Synagogues*, as well as in the *Temple*. They are called the *Houses of God*, and his *Places of Assembly*. The Original Word in both Places is the same that is used for the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*, or the *Tabernacle of Meeting*, as the Word signifies; to
called

called not only because the *People met* there, but chiefly because *God met* there with the People, as God himself assures us; saying, 'In the Tabernacle of the Congregation, or *Meeting*, where 'I will meet with thee,' *Exod. xxx. 36. vid. Chap. xxv. 22. Chap. xxix. 42.* From whence it appears, that these *Synagogues* also, as called by the same Name, were Places where God met with his People, and bestowed his *Blessings* upon them. And that is the Reason that the Prophets complain so much of this, as one of the greatest Calamities that could befall a Nation, that the *Houses of God* should be burned and destroyed; so that they had no such Publick and Solemn *Places* left, where they could meet with him. Hence also it was, that the *Jews* esteemed the Building of a *Synagogue*, to be so good a Work, and so great a Kindness to them, as appears from their Elders commending the Centurion to our Saviour, as a Person worthy of his Favour upon that Account; for, say they, 'He loveth our Nation, and he hath 'built us a Synagogue,' *Luke vii. 5.* And hence, lastly, it is, that we so often read in the *Gospels* and *Acts* of the Apostles, that Christ himself, and his Apostles, went as constantly into the *Synagogues*, when they were in the Country, as they went to the *Temple*, when they were at *Jerusalem*; those being the most *proper* Places, not only for *Prayer*, but likewise for the *preaching* and *hearing* God's Holy Word, which was *read in the Synagogue every Sabbath-day*, *Acts xv. 21.*

These Things I thought good to put you in mind of at this time, that you might know how great a Value the Church and People of God, in
ancient

ancient times, set upon Places devoted to him, and might learn from thence to do so too: For our *Churches* now are so solemnly dedicated to the Service of God, and therefore are as much *his Houses*, his *Houses of Prayer*, as ever the Jewish *Synagogues* were, or the *Temple* itself. The very Name of *Church* in *Greek*, from whence it comes, signifies the *Lord's House*. And it cannot be imagined by any Christian, but that God hath as much Propriety in, and as much Respect unto his *Houses* now as he ever had. It is true, we have not such Sacrifices offered in our *Churches*, as were in the *Temple*; but we have one, which answers the Ends of all these *Sacrifices*, and far excells them all together, even the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*, instituted and celebrated in memory of the Death of the Lamb of God, which by the legal Sacrifices was only fore-shew'd, and typified. And whereas then Sacrifices were offered only in one Place, at the *Temple* in *Jerusalem*, not in any of their *Synagogues*: The *Holy Sacrament* of Christ's Body and Blood is administred, not only in our *Cathedrals*, but in all *Parish-churches*. And it being only by virtue of that Blood which was only typified in theirs, but is commemorated in our Churches, that our Prayers are heard, our Services accepted, or any of God's Promises are ever fulfilled to us; we cannot doubt but that all the Promises which he made of *meeting* and *blessing* his People in such Places, were intended for, and belong to us, and to our *Churches*, as the two great Apostles did to the *Temple* at the *Hour of Prayer*.

The Word Church
signifying the
Lord's House.

And

And that is the other thing which I promised to consider in these Words, the *time* when these Apostles went up together into the Temple, they went at *the Hour of Prayer, being the ninth Hour*: that is, at *three o'Clock* in the Afternoon: For the *Jews* divided the

Hours of Prayer amongst the Jews, were our 9 and 3, their third and ninth hours.

Day from Sun-rising to Sun-setting into *Twelve Hours*, John xi. 9. and therefore according to their Account, the time of the Sun's rising about *Six o'Clock* was their *first Hour*: the *third Hour* was our *Nine o'Clock* in the Morning, and their *Ninth* our *Third* in the Afternoon. And these two last, even the *Third* and the *Ninth* Hours, or according to our Account, *Nine* in the Morning and *Three* in the Afternoon, were their constant Hours of Prayer every Day in the Year. But to understand how they came to be so, we must first observe, that in the Old Law God commanded two Lambs to be offered upon the Altar every Day, as a continual Burnt-Offering: 'The one Lamb, saith he, thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other Lamb thou shalt offer at evening, Ex. xxix 39. Numb. xxviii. 4.' or as it is in the Hebrew between the two Evenings, or about the midst between Noon and Sun-set, which was, according to their Reckoning, the *Ninth Hour*. This we may learn from *Josephus*, the best *Jewish* Writer that is extant, where he saith, that the solemn Sacrifices were offered twice a-day, in the Morning, and at the ninth Hour, *Josephus, Antiq. l. 14. c. 8.* And so the *Talmudists* tell us, that the daily Evening Sacrifice was killed at half an Hour past *Eight*, and offered upon the Altar after *Nine.*

Nine. These, therefore, were the two set Hours for the continual Burnt-Offerings every Day, *Three* in the Morning, which is our *Nine*, and *Nine* which is our *Three* in the Afternoon.

These two Hours being appointed by God himself for the *Daily Sacrifice*, there was doubtless great reason for it, which seems to

be this: These, as all the bloody Sacrifices, were offered up only as *Types* and Representatives of that *Grand Sacrifice*, which *Christ* the Lamb of God, was to offer for the Sins of the World: And therefore they were appointed at the same

Because the bloody Sacrifices were then offered as *Types* of the Lamb of God, whose Sufferings, began and ended with these Hours.

Hours wherein his Death was begun, as I may so speak, and finished. About the *Third Hour*, or *Nine* in the Morning, he was delivered to *Pilate*, accused, examined, and condemned to die, and therefore the *Morning Sacrifice* was appointed at *that Hour*. About the *Sixth Hour*, or *Noon*, this Lamb of God was laid upon the Altar of the Cross, and at the *Ninth Hour* expired; as we learn from *St. Matthew*, saying, 'Now from the Sixth Hour there was Darkness over all the Land, until the Ninth Hour; and about the Ninth Hour Jesus cried with a loud Voice, *Eli, Eli, Lama sabacthani*, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! And having cried again with a loud Voice, he yielded up the Ghost,' *Matth.* xxvii. 45, 46, 50. And this I verily believe was the Reason that the *Evening Sacrifice* every Day was appointed to be offered up at the *Ninth Hour*, that so the very time of *Christ's Suffering* might be foreshewn and

D

typified

typified by it, as the Place also was; it being absolutely forbidden to offer up any such Sacrifice after the Temple was built any where else, but only at *Jerusalem* where Christ was to suffer.

Now to bring this nearer to our present Purpose, we must further observe, that in all these continual Burnt-offerings, when the Lamb was laid upon the Altar, a Priest with a Censer took some of the Coals from off that Altar, and carried them into the Holy Place, where he put *Incense* upon them, and so offered it upon the Golden Altar before the *Veil* made for that Purpose. This took some considerable time, usually about half an Hour: All which Time the People were at their Devotions, worshipping and praying, and praising God; as appears from St. *Luke* himself, who speaking of *Zacharias*, the Father of St. *John* the Baptist, saying, 'According to the Custom of the Priest's Office, his Lot was to burn Incense, when he went into the Temple of the Lord. And the whole Multitude of the People were praying without at the Time of Incense,' *Luke*, i. 9, 10.

And because the holy Incense was then burnt as a Type of Christ's Intercession.

This therefore was their time of Prayer: And it was the most proper time that could be for it, while the Lamb was burning upon the Altar without, as a Type of the Death of Christ; and the sweet *Incense* was burning within the Holy Place, upon Coals taken from thence, to put them in mind of his Intercession which he makes by Virtue of that Death he suffered for them, that their Prayers might be *heard*, and their Services *accepted* before God. All which was represented in a Vision to
St. *John*,

St. *John*, ' when he saw seven Angels which stood
' before God, and another Angel (*which was Christ*
' *the Mediator*) came and stood at the Altar, hav-
' ing a golden Censer, and there was given unto
' him much Incense, that he should offer it with
' the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar
' which was before the Throne. And the Smoak
' of the Incense, which came with the Prayers of
' the Saints, ascended up before God out of the
' Angels Hand,' *Rev. viii. 3, 4.*

For hereby is plainly signified, that God smells
a sweet Savour in the Prayers of his People, or ac-
cepts of them only upon the Account of the Me-
rits of the Death of *Jesus Christ*, the *Angel* of
the Covenant, and by means of his Mediation for
them, typified by the sweet *Incense* burning upon
Coals taken from the Altar, whereupon the Lamb
was offered, at the same time that the People were
at their Devotions, and so ascending up together
with them into Heaven, and there rendring them
acceptable to God. The same is intimated also by
St. *Peter*, where speaking to the Saints of God,
he saith, ' Ye also, as lively stones, are built up
' a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer
' up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Je-
' sus Christ, *1. Pet. ii. 5.*' Whereas our Pray-
ers, and the other Services which we perform to
him, are called *Sacrifices*, in allusion to, but *spi-*
ritual, to distinguish them from those under the
Law; so they are said to be *acceptable to God*,
not in themselves, but by *Jesus Christ*: By *Je-*
sus Christ perfuming them with the Spiritual *In-*
cense of his own Merits, and so making them a
sweet.

sweet Savour to the Lord, as it was *Typically* expressed in the Law, *Lev. i. 9, &c.*

By this therefore we may see how the *third* and *ninth* Hours of the Day, or, as we speak, *Nine* in the Morning, and *Three* in the Afternoon, came to be their chief *set hours* for *Prayer* every Day, even because at these Hours the *daily Sacrifices* were offered, and the *holy Incense* burnt, as Types of Christ's Death and Intercession, whereby alone their Prayers could go up as a Memorial before God, and be well-pleasing to him. For this cause therefore these were their *constant* Hours of Prayer, not only at the Temple in *Jerusalem*,

Hours of prayer
the same in the
Country Syna-
gogues as in the
Temple.

but in their *Synagogues* also all the Country over, devout People daily resorting thither at the said Hours to perform their Devotions, that so they might both keep up their Communion with the Church at *Jerusalem*, and likewise communicate in the *Sacrifices* and *Incense*, which were there offered at *these hours*, or rather in what was signified by them for God's Acceptance of what they did. But they who dwelt at *Jerusalem*

That all the *Jews*
might hold Com-
munion with the
Church at *Jerusa-*
lem.

usually went to the Temple itself, at the aforefaid Hours. And that is the Reason that there were *so many gathered together there upon the Day of Pentecost, at the third Hour of the Day*, as St. Peter saith, *Acts ii. 15.* 'That three

'Thousand of them were there converted to the Faith of Christ.' *Acts ii. 41.* And there were as

And in the Sacri-
fices and Incense
then offer'd.

many or more there at the ninth Hour, when St. Peter and St. John went thither together, as appears in that

'There

‘ There were above five Thousand at that Time
‘ converted.’ *Acts* iv. 4.

But how many soever were there besides, be sure
these two great Apostles went together *into the Tem-
ple at the Hour of Prayer, being the*
Ninth Hour : Not now out of any
Respect to the *Sacrifices* which were
still continued to be offered by the
unbelieving *Jews*. For the *Apostles*
knew well enough that all the Laws about them ex-
pired upon the Death of *Christ*.

*St. Peter and St.
John went to the
Temple at 3, as
to a House of
Prayer.*

So that now all such Sacrifices could signify no-
thing at all. But they went to the *Temple*, as it
was an *House of Prayer* ; a Duty that always was,
and always must be performed unto God. *And*
they went at the ninth Hour, because it was the
Hour of Prayer. It had been so for many Ages,
and there was no Reason why it should now be
laid aside. God himself had appointed it for the
Time of the *Evening Sacrifice*, because *Christ*, the
grand Sacrifice of the World, was to be offered up
at that Time. And though the Virtue of the *Le-
gal Sacrifice* was now ceased, yet the Reason why
that Time was appointed for it, still continued,
there being as much Reason why *Christ's Death*
should be commemorated by our *chri-*

stian Sacrifice, as there was, that it
should be foreshewn and typified by
the *Legal*, about the Time it hap-
pened. At least there was no Reason
to the contrary. And therefore that

*Because Christ's
Death was thence-
forward to be
commemorated
by the Christian
Sacrifice.*

being the *usual Time* for publick Prayers in the
Place where they then were, they *went up together*
into the Temple at that Hour to perform their De-
votions.

tions. And it is left upon Record that they did so, as I observed before, on Purpose that the Church in all Ages might learn by their Example to set apart some certain Times every Day in the Year for *publick Prayer*. And accordingly as the Jewish Church had by God's own Appointment the *Morning* and *Evening* Sacrifice every Day

Hence the christian Church derived its Morning and Evening Service.

in the Year : So all Christian Churches have been used to have their *Morning* and *Evening* Prayers *publickly* perform'd every Day. As might easily be shewn out of the Records of the Church, from the Beginning of Christianity.

Not to insist upon other Churches, I shall instance at present only in our *own* ; which as in all Things else, so particularly in this, is exactly conformable to the *Catholick and Apostolick* Church. In the first Book of *Common-prayer* made by our Church

The Church of England conformable to the catholic Church, in her Hours of Prayer.

at the Beginning of the Reformation, there was a *Form* composed both for *Morning* and *Evening Prayer* : The Title of that for the Morning ran thus ; *An Order for Mattins daily through the Year* : And of that for the Evening, *An Order for Even Song throughout the Year* : And accordingly there were Psalms and Chapters appointed both for the *Morning* and *Evening* of every Day. About three or four Yeats after, the same Book was revised, and put forth again. And then the Church taking Notice that *daily Prayers* had been in some Places neglected, at the End of the Preface she added two Rules, or as we call them, *Rubricks*, which are still in Force, as you may see in the *Common-Prayer Books* which we now use.

The

The First is :

“ And all the Priests and Deacons are to say daily the Morning and Evening Prayer, either privately or openly, not being let by Sickneſs, or other urgent Cauſe.”

By this every one that is admitted into *holy Orders*, altho’ he be neither *Parſon*, *Vicar* nor *Curate* of any particular Place, yet he is bound to ſay both *Morning* and *Evening* Prayer every Day, either in ſome *Church* or *Chapel*, where he can get leave to do it, or elſe in the Houſe where he dwells, except he be hindred by ſome ſuch Cauſe which the Ordinary of the Place judges to be reaſonable and urgent.

Every Miniſter bound to ſay Morning and Evening Prayer every Day, either in a Church or Chapel, or his own Houſe.

The other Order is this :

“ And the Curate that miniſtreth in every Pariſh-Church or Chapel, being at Home, and not being otherwiſe reaſonably hindred, ſhall ſay the ſame in the Pariſh-Church or Chapel where he miniſtreth, and ſhall cauſe a Bell to be tolled thereunto, a convenient Time before he begin, that People may come to hear God’s Word, and pray with him ”

Here we have a plain and expreſs Command, that the *Curate*, whether he be the Incumbent himſelf, or another procured by him to do it; whoſoever it is that miniſtreth God’s Holy Word and Sacraments in any *Church* or *Chapel* in *England*, ſhall ſay the ſame Morning and Evening

Every Pariſh-Prieſt is obliged to ſay Prayers in the Church or Chapel Morning and Evening every Day.

Evening Prayer daily in the Parish-Church or Chapel where he ministreth, and shall take Care that a Bell be tolled a convenient Time before he begins, that People having Notice of it may come to God's *House* to hear his Holy Word read, and join with the Minister in performing their *publick* Devotions to him. This every Minister or Curate in *England* is bound to do every Day in the Year, if he be at Home, and be not otherwise reasonably hindred. And whether any Hindrance be reasonable or no, the Minister himself is not the Ordinary Judge: For in all such Cases that is referred by the common Laws of the *Church*, to the *Bishop* of the Diocese, or the *Ordinary* of the Place where he ministreth.

The Law hath made this the *Duty* of every Minister, and the *Bishop* or *Ordinary* is And the Bishop to see that he doth his Duty. to see he doth it; and whether any have reasonable Cause ever to omit it, or whether the Cause they pretend for it be reasonable or no; this is left by the Law to him. He may allow or disallow of the Pretence, as he upon the full hearing of it shall see good; and may punish with the *Censures* of the Church any Minister within his Jurisdiction that doth not read the Prayers of the Church, or take care they be read every *Morning* and *Evening* in the Year, except at such Times when the Minister can prove that he had such a reasonable Hindrance or Impediment as will justify him before God and his Church.

This care hath our Church taken, that *publick* So that all in the *prayers* be read every *Morning* and *Evening* throughout the Year in every the Church of *England* may pray publicly twice every day. Parish within her Bounds, that all who live in her Communion, may after

after the Example of the *Apostles* in my Text, ' Go every Day into the *Temple* or *Church* at the *Hour* of *Prayer*.' She hath not appointed the *Hour* when either the *Morning* or *Evening* Prayer shall begin : Because the same *Hour* might not be convenient in all *Places* : So that in some *Places* it might be pretended that there was a reasonable *Hindrance* : That it could not be done just at the *Time*. Wherefore to prevent any such *Plea*, and to make the *Duty* as easy and practicable, both to the *Minister* and *People*, as it could be, the *Church* hath left that to the *Ministers* themselves, who, considering every one his own and his *Peoples* *Circumstances*, may and ought to appoint such *hours* both for *Morning* and *Evening* Prayer in their respective *Places*, as they in their *Discretion* shall judge to be most convenient. Only they ought to take care in general, that *Morning* Prayers be always read before, and *Evening* after *Noon*. And it is very expedient that the *same Hours* be every *Day*, as much as it is possible, observed in the same *Place*, that *People* knowing it beforehand may order their *Affairs*, so as to be ready to go to the *Church* at the *Hour* of *Prayer*.

But notwithstanding this great Care that our *Church* hath taken to have *daily* Prayers in every *Parish*, we see by The Neglect of this chargeable upon Priest or People sad Experience they are shamefully neglected all the *Kingdom* over :

There being very few *Places* where they have any publick Prayers upon the *Week-days*, except perhaps upon *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* ; because it is expressly commanded, that both *Morning* and *Evening* Prayers be read every *Day* in the *Week*,

as the *Litany* upon those. And why this Commandment should be neglected more than the other, for my Part I can see no reason. But I see plain enough that it is a great Fault, a plain Breach of the known Laws of Christ's Holy Catholick Church, and particularly of that part of it, which by his Blessing is settled among us. But where doth this Fault lie? I hope not in the

Upon the Cler. *Clergy*. For I dare not suppose or
 ev? imagine, but that every *Minister* in *England*, that hath the Care of Souls committed to him, would be willing and glad to read the *Prayers* every Day for their Edification, if the People would be persuaded to come to them. I am sure there is never a Minister but is obliged to read them *daily*; and never a Parish in *England*, but where the People may have them so read, if they will; for they may *require* it by the *Laws* both of our *Church* and *State*, except at such Times when their Minister is reasonably hindred from the Execution of his Office in the Sense before explained.

Or Laity?

But the Mischief is, Men cannot, or rather will not, be persuaded to it. They think it a great Matter to come to Church upon the *Lord's Day*, when they cannot openly follow their particular Callings if they would. Upon other Days they have other Business to mind of greater Consequence, as they think, than going to *Prayers*. To some it is a

The frivolous Pretences of the Laity for neglecting Prayers.

great Disturbance to hear the *Bell* sounding in their Ears, and calling them to their Duty, which they being resolved not to practise, it makes them

very

very uneasy to be so often put in mind of it. Others can make a shift to bear that pretty well, as not looking upon themselves concerned in it. For they take it for granted, that *Prayers* were intended only for such as have nothing else to do. As for their Parts, they have a great deal of Work upon their Hands, and must mind that, without troubling their Heads about any thing else. This is the plain case of some; but not of all. Blessed be God, he hath opened the Eyes of many, especially in this *City*, who now see *the Things that belong to their everlasting Peace*, and therefore are as constant at their *publick Devotions*, as they are at their *private Business*: And I trust in his infinite Goodness and Mercy,

that he who hath *begun so good a Work among us*, will one Day perfect it, that we may all meet together *with one Heart, and with one*

Hopes of a Reformation in this particular from the following Consideration.

mouth to pray unto him, and *praise and glorify* his great Name *every Day* in the Week, both in this *City*, and all the Kingdom over. What an *happy City*, what a *glorious Kingdom* would it then be! And how happy should I think myself, if it would please God to make me, the unworthiest of all his Servants, an Instrument in his Almighty Hand towards the effecting of it in *this Place*! It is too great a Felicity for me to flatter myself with the least hopes of. However, I must do my duty, and leave the Issue to him who hath the Hearts of all Men in his Hand. And therefore in his Name, shall lay some such plain and obvious Considerations before you, which I hope, by his Blessing, may prevail upon all here present to follow

the Holy Apostles in my Text, ' In going together into the House of God at the Hour of Prayer.

For this purpose I might shew the *Excellency* and *Usefulness* of the *Prayers* which our Church hath appointed to be read every *Morning* and *Evening*. But having already offered at something to-

The Excellency and Usefulness of common Prayer itself.

See the Bishop's Sermon of the Usefulness and Excellency of the common Prayer.

wards that upon another Occasion, I shall here only premise in general, that they are such both for their *Language*, the *Matter*, the *Method*, and the *Manner* of performing them, that, to speak with the least, there never was, that we know of, nor is at this day, a *better*, or more *proper Form* of *publick Devotions* prescribed and used in any Part of Christ's Church militant here on Earth: There being nothing wanting in them, that can any way conduce to the Ends for which they are designed, even to the setting forth of God's Glory, and to the edifying of his People. There we *confess* our Sins to God, and have his Pardon and Absolution of them declared to us, being penitent, by one of his own Ministers. *There we praise* and *magnify* his glorious Name, *in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs*. *There* we have some part of his Holy Word *read*, and so his *divine Will* made known to us. *There* we pray for all things necessary both for Life and Godliness; for whatsoever we can want, or desire to make us happy in this World and the next. And all this we there do in such a solemn and reverent Manner, as becomes the Work we are about: Infomuch that if it be not our own fault, we can never go to *Church*, but we shall return better than we went. Which if all People were but as sensible of

of as some are, we should not need to use any Arguments to persuade them to frequent our publick Prayers as oft as possibly they can. But it is impossible they should ever know what Advantage it would be to them, unless they first made trial of it.

Which therefore that I may, by God's Assistance, persuade all here present for the future to do; I desire you to consider first, that he himself that made you, hath sufficiently declared it to be his Will and Pleasure that you should perform publick Devotions to him twice a day, *Morning and Evening*, and

God's command to the *Israelites* for publick Devotions twice a day.

that he expressly required and commanded his ancient Church and People, the Children of *Israel*, to do so. For as I have shewn, he commanded them to sacrifice two Lambs every day; one in the *Morning*, and the other in the *Evening*, or *Afternoon*: Which was the same in effect, as to command them to perform their publick Devotions to him twice every Day. For such were the sacrifices unto them. Not only because, by offering up such sacrifices to him in Obedience to his Command, they publicly acknowledged his supreme Authority and Power over all things; but likewise, because, together with their sacrifices, they always offered up, as they were bound, their Prayers and Praises to him. For they never sacrificed, but they prayed at the same time, and esteemed no Prayers so effectual, as those which were joined with sacrifices; as appears from several Places of Scripture, where we read, that, 'Abraham built an Altar unto the Lord, and called upon the Name of the Lord, *Gen. xii. 8.*' And so did Isaac, Chap. xxvi. 25. He first built an Altar whereon to offer his sacrifice, and then prayed.

And

And of *Samuel* it is said, ' That he took a sucking
 ' Lamb, and offered it for a Burnt offering, wholly
 ' unto the Lord, and *Samuel* cried unto the Lord
 ' for *Israel*, and the Lord heard him, 1 *Sam.* vii. 9.
 And when *Samuel* had blamed *Saul* for offering a
 Burnt-offering before the time that he came to him,
 according to his Promise; *Saul* to excuse himself,
 ' said, I said the *Philistines* will come down now
 ' upon me to *Gilgal*, and I have not made my Sup-
 ' plication unto the Lord. I forced myself therefore,
 ' and offered a Burnt-offering, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 12.'
 where he speaks as if offering his Sacrifice, and
 making his *supplication unto the Lord*, was one and
 the same thing; not that it was so in itself, as some
 have thought but because that Sacrifice was so ne-
 cessary as to make his Prayer acceptable unto God.
 that he could not do one without the other; he could
 not pray, as he thought effectually, without a Burnt-
 offering. There are many such Places in the *Old*
Testament, from whence it might be proved, that
 Sacrifices and Prayers always went together; neither
 are there some wanting in the *New*. As in the
 Place which I mentioned before on another Occa-
 sion, where it is said, ' That the whole multitude
 ' of the People were praying without at the
 ' Time of Incense, *Luke* i. 10.' For the time of
Incense was while the *Sacrifice* was burning upon
 the Altar, and therefore that was the time of their
publick Prayers. But I need not have gone from
 my Text, to have proved this. For, *the Ninth*
Hour here is called *the Hour of Prayer*; but that
 as I have proved already, was *the Hour* of the
 Evening Sacrifice, which puts it beyond all doubt,
 that their daily Sacrifices were always accompa-
 nied

nied in course with *publick* Prayers and Devotions. And that is the Reason, why the Temple, where the Sacrifices were offered, was called *an House of Prayer*, as well as *an House of Sacrifice*, 2 Sam. vii. 12. Yea, it is much oftner called by that Name, than it is by this; Prayer being the Duty principally required there, and Sacrifice only for the Sake of that, to make way for it to go up as a Memorial before God, and to be well-pleasing to him; not as if there was any such Virtue in the Blood of a Lamb, or in Flesh smoaking upon the Altar; but by the Means of the Typical Relation which it had to Christ, *the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World*; by whom alone our Prayers are acceptable unto God, as I observed before.

Wherefore, seeing God was pleased to command, that Sacrifices should be offered *twice* a-day, to accompany and assist his People's

Devotions; there was plainly something *Moral* as well as *Levitical*, in that Command. As it respected the

The publick Devotions of the Jews were Moral and Levitical.

Sacrifices it was purely *Levitical*, and therefore to cease at our Saviour's *Death*: But as it respected the People's *Devotions*, it was *Moral*, and of perpetual Obligation. People always were, and always will be, bound to offer up their *Prayers* and *Thanksgivings* unto God, and this, as being a moral Duty, was even in those Days reckoned the *more acceptable* Sacrifice of the two. ' I will

' praise the Name of God, *saith David*, with a Song, and I will magnify him with Thanksgiving; ' this also shall please the Lord, bet-

The Moral Part the most regarded, even amongst the Jews.

' ter

‘ter than Ox or Bullock that hath Horns and
 ‘Hoofs, *Psal.* lxxix. 30. 31.’ And therefore when
 God commanded the *less*, it cannot be imagined
 but that he required the *more* principal Duty, even
publick Prayers and Praises to be offered to him
twice a-day; as the *Jews* plainly understood it;
 as appears in that they had their *daily* Prayers
 as constantly as they had their *daily* Sacrifices,
 and that too at the same Times when God com-
 manded them to be offer’d, even every *Morning*
 and *Evening*; which they would not have had,
 if they had not looked upon themselves as oblig’d
 by that Command to pray, as well as to sacrifice
 at those times.

But surely to pray to God, and to praise his
 holy Name, which make up our *publick Devoti-*

No less amongst *ons*, is a Duty as much incumbent
 Christians. upon *Christians*, as ever it was upon

Jews. It is our only daily Sacrifice which we
 offer unto God in the Name of his Son: ‘By
 ‘him therefore, *saith the Apostle*, let us offer the
 ‘Sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is,
 ‘the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks unto his
 ‘Name, *Heb.* xiii. 15. This is now to be our
 continual Sacrifice. And tho’ we do not offer up
 a Lamb to God, together with our *Devotions*
 every Day, yet we present that to him which is
 of more Worth and Value than what the *Jews*
 offered. *They* presented the Shadow, *we* the Sub-
 stance: *They* offered a *Lamb*, as a Type of Christ
 to come; *we* offer up our *Prayers* to God in the
 Name of Christ himself, as already sacrificed for
 us, and as presenting our Prayers to his Father
 with the Incense of his own Merits. Whilst they
 prayed,

prayed, Christ's *Death* and *Intercession* for them were only typically represented by a Lamb burning upon one, and Incense upon another Altar. But in all our Prayers we actually name Him, as the Person by whose alone Merits and Mediations our Prayers can be accepted, concluding every *Collect* with saying, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, or something to that Purpose.

By which means we have better Ground, and clearer Occasion also given us to trust in God for his Acceptance of our *devotions* than they had; and therefore ought certainly to be as constant as they were in the performance of them: otherwise we can expect no other, but that they will rise up against us in Judgment at the last Day: Neither do I see what we can answer, or plead for ourselves. For God having *once* commanded that Sacrifices should be offered to him every *Morning* and *Evening* in the Year; he thereby plainly signified, that it is his Divine Will and Pleasure that his People in all *Ages* should do something *twice* every day, whereby to make their publick Acknowledgements of his infinite Goodness and Mercy to them. But this we cannot do now any other Way, but by praying to him, and praising and magnifying his most glorious Name, in a *publick* and solemn manner, which we are therefore doubtless bound to do, or at least to take all Opportunities that we can get of doing it twice every Day.

Nay, the *Christian* sacrifice is more acceptable to God than the *Jewish*.

And indeed *Christ* himself doth in effect require the same thing of us; for that it is his Pleasure that we should constantly use *that Form* of Prayer, which he, as our great Lord and Master, was pleased to compose for all his *Disciples*, is so plain, that I wonder how any can doubt of it, there being no *Command* in all the Bible more plain than that, 'When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven,' &c. *Luke* ii. 2. But it is as plain, that he designed *this Prayer* should be used *publickly*, and in *common* by his *Disciples* when met together in their publick Assemblies: In that he hath drawn it up all along in the *plural Number*, that many may join together in it, and say, 'Our Father which art in Heaven, give us this Day our daily Bread, and forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that Trespase against us, and lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.' So that there is not *one* Petition, nor *one* Expression in it, but what a *whole Congregation* may jointly use. From whence *St. Cyprian* truly observed, that this is *Publica & Communis Oratio*, a *publick* and *common Prayer*. Not but that it may, and ought to be used also privately by every single *Christian* apart by himself; because every *Christian* is a Member of *Christ's Catholick Church*, and should pray as such in *private*, as well as in *publick*; and for all his Fellow Members, as well as for himself, they being all but one Body. But however it must be acknowledg'd, that it being so exactly fitted to a *publick* Congregation, it was primarily and chiefly intended for that Purpose. And that our Saviour

viour would have us say this Prayer every Day, appears most plainly from that Petition in it, *Give us this Day our daily Bread.* For this shews, that as we depend upon God every Day for our necessary Food, so we ought to pray unto him every Day for it. And if we must put up this Petition every Day, we must put up all the rest with it. For Christ hath *joined* them together, and therefore we must not *put them asunder*. Neither is there any Part of the Prayer but what is as necessary to be said every Day as this.

Wherefore, seeing our blessed Saviour himself was most graciously pleased to compose *this* Prayer so as to suit it to our daily *publick Devotions*, and hath plainly commanded us to use it, according as he had composed it; we may reasonably from thence infer, that it is his divine Will and Pleasure that we should *publickly* pray to our heavenly Father every Day, as his Church had all along before done it, *Morning and Evening*. Be-
 sure his Apostles thought so, when ^{4. As well as the Practice of the Apostles.} they had received his Holy Spirit, to *lead them* according to his Promise, *into all Truth*, and to *bring into their remembrance all Things that he said unto them*. For after the Day of *Pentecost*, on which the Holy Ghost came upon them, the next News that we hear of any of them, is, that *Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the Hour of Prayer*, being *the Ninth Hour*, or the Hour of *Evening Prayer*; which they would not have done, if they had not believed it to be agreeable to the Doctrine which he had taught them.

5. Natural Reason calls for daily publick Prayer and Praise.

And if there was no *divine Revelation* for it, our own *natural Reason* might teach us the same Thing. For seeing we depend continually upon God, and every Day receive fresh Mercies from him; there is all the Reason in the World that we should every Day some way or other testify our Acknowledgment that we do so; for that is all that we can do to him for all that he doth for us. We cannot give him any thing; for we have nothing but what he gives us. And therefore he expects nothing from us for all the Favours he is pleased to shew us, but only to own that they come from him; and to shew we do so by all such Means and Methods as he for that Purpose hath prescribed to us. Of which, the Performance of *publick Devotions* was always reckon'd the most plain and proper. I say *publick*, for what we do in *private* none in the World knows but God and ourselves. But by performing our *publick Devotions* to him, we demonstrate to the World that we believe and acknowledge that he is the Supreme Governor and Disposer of all Things in it, that it is in him *we live, we move, and have our Being*; and that we neither have, nor can have any thing but what we receive from him. By our *praising* him for what we have, we own that it was he who gave it: And by *praying* to him for what we want, we own it is he alone who can give it to us. And by doing this *publickly*, we shew that we are not ashamed to own it, nor care if all the World knows that we have nothing of our own; nothing but what we receive from God, and wish that
all

all others would join with us, and assist us in *praising* of him, and in *praying* to him, both for themselves and for us too. This is properly to *serve* God, and *glorify* him in the World. The great Work we were made for, and for which we are still supported and maintained by him. So that by this Means we may so far answer the End of our Creation, and the End of all his Goodness and Mercies to us. For he made all Things 'for himself at first, *Prov. xvi. 4.*' And he still doth all Things for *himself*, even for *his own* Glory. And we accordingly set forth *his* Glory in all our *publick Devotions*; by owning him publickly for our great and continual Benefactor, by recounting the glorious Works that he hath done for us, and supplicating him for all the good Things that we can ever have: And so ascribing the Glory of all to him. And therefore we ought in Reason to perform such Devotions as often as we can. We are bound to do it, by all those Reasons which oblige us to serve God that made us, and do the Work which he sent us into the World about. For that this is properly *serving* of God, or as we therefore call it, *divine Service*, the Holy Ghost himself testifies, where speaking of *Anna* the Prophetess, he saith, 'that she departed not from the Temple, but served God 'with fasting and prayer Night and Day,' *Luke ii. 47.* that is, as she constantly kept the *Fasts* of the *Church*, so she as constantly went to the *Temple at the Hour of Prayer*, both Evening and Morning, and there performed her Devotions. And if we would have the same Testimony that she had, even that we serve God, we must endeavour

deavour all we can to follow her pious Example, as we see the Apostles in my Text did, by going *into the Temple*, or the *House of God at the Hour of Prayer*.

And, as this is much for the *Honour* of God, so it is also for the *Honour* of Christ, and that

Christians bound to exceed all others in the performance of publick Devotions, for the Honour of Christ. Holy Religion which he hath planted upon Earth; which, though it be the *best*, or rather the *only true* Religion profess'd in the World, yet it cannot appear to be so any other

Way, than by the Lives and Actions of those who profess it; and particularly by the *frequency* of their *publick Devotions* to the Supreme Governor of the World. If they who profess the *Christian Religion*, come short of other People in this, it would be a great Reflection upon the Founder of it. For it would seem to intimate as if his Religion had not that Power upon the Minds of Men as others have; nor answered the *end* and *notion* of Religion in general, even the *glorifying* Almighty God so well as others do. But there are no People upon Earth, we know of, who have any Sense of Religion at all, but they do something or other every Day, whereby to express it, and to shew the great Esteem and Respect they have for the God they worship.

The *Mahometans*, altho' their Religion be grounded upon meer Imposture, yet notwithstanding, being obliged by it to pray *five* Times a Day, they usually do it if they can, in their

Mosques or *Temples*. I know the *primitive Christians* prayed oftner, and so do many at this Day, either

Else *Mahometans* and *Jews* will rise up in Judgment against them.

either in *publick* or *private*. But the greatest Part of those which are called *Christians*, scarce every pray, at least as we know of, so much as *once a Week*, unless it be perhaps on the *Lord's Day*. Nay, I fear there are many, who never *publickly* pray at all for a whole Year together, if in their whole Lives. But woe to such *Christians* as these, if they may be called so, who thus *crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, putting him to open shame*. It will be far more tolerable for *Turks and Mahometans at the Day of Judgment, than for these*.

The *Jews*, as I have shewn, had their set *Hours of Prayer*, every *Morning and Evening*, both at their *Temple*, and in all their *Synagogues*, which were dispersed all over the Country. And they were so *constant and punctual* in going thither, at the *Hours of Prayer*, that if any one lived near a *Synagogue*, and did not *then* go to pray with the *Congregation*, they put a Mark upon that Man, calling him an *ill Neighbour*, as *Maimonides*, a learned *Jew* assures us in his *Tephillah*. I wish there were no such *Neighbours* among us, *ill Neighbours*, that seldom or never join with us in our *publick Devotions*; and so, as to all outward Appearance, live as *without God in the World*. But what a Reproach is this to our *holy Religion*, and to our *blessed Saviour* himself, the Author of it, that *Jews and Turks*, who are *Strangers, yea Enemies* to his *Religion*, should be *more constant* at their *Devotions* to Almighty God, than they who profess it! God grant it may *never be laid to their Charge*. But why do I wish that, when I know that it will. It will most certainly be *laid to their Charge*

Charge e'er long, except they repent of it before it be too late; and that too, so as to be as *constant* for the future at our *publick Prayers*, as they have hitherto slighted or neglected them.

This would, in a great Measure retrieve the *Honour*, which *our Religion* hath lost by such *careless* Professors of it: For it would cast such a Lustre upon it, as would make it outshine all *other Religions* in its outward Appearance, as much as it excels them in its inward Purity and Truth; which would redound very much to the Glory of *Christ*, our ever blessed Redeemer. And therefore all that have any Regard for that, as I hope we all have, can't but look upon themselves as *bound* in Duty to take all *Opportunities* they can get, of *performing* their *publick Devotions* to Almighty God, according as that *Religion* requires, which he hath *taught*, and they *profess*.

If we wou'd but give ourselves time to *look into* these Things, which I have thus briefly explained; we might easily see what *Obligations* lie upon *Ministers* to *read* and upon *People* to *assist* at our *publick Prayers*, when and wheresoever they can get an *Opportunity*. It is God's Will, and for his Glory; and therefore it is our Duty, and we are bound to do it, whether we can get any Thing by it or no. But that great and most gracious God, whom we serve, hath of his *infinite Goodness* so order'd it, that whatsoever is done in Obedience to his *Command*, and for the *Honour* of his Name, doth *ipso Facto*, tend also to our *Profit* and *Advantage*. And this particularly doth so in an high Degree.

If

Prayer itself, in general, is a Duty so well-pleasing unto God, that he hath appointed it to be the Means whereby to obtain of him all the good Things we can want or desire: He hath passed his Word, and hath promised to grant them, if we ask them as we ought, in the Name of Christ, and with Faith in his Word and Promise, *Matt. vii. 7. xxi, 22. Mark xi, 24. Job. xvi. 23, &c.* And if the Prayers, which single Persons make in their own private Houses or Closets, be so powerful and prevalent, those are much more so which are made by several Persons met together for that Purpose in God's House. To the publick Prayers there are many special Promises made, which belong peculiarly unto them. I shall instance only in two. The first shall be that of our blessed Saviour; 'Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on Earth, as touching any Thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them, *Matt. xviii. 19, 20.*' Here we have Christ's own Word, that where any two (much more where many) agree to ask any Thing of God, as we do in every Petition we put up in our publick Prayers, it shall be done for them. And that where two or three or any Number of devout Persons are met together in his Name, he is specially present with them to hear their Prayers, and to present them to his Father, to be accepted, and granted by him. Which Promise, in all respects, doth as

The Advantage of Prayer as well-pleasing to God.

Especially of publick Prayers.

God's Promises to them.

properly belong to our *publick*, as to any Prayers that can be made; they being such as we all agree in beforehand; and we do not only meet, but put them up also in the Name of *Christ*.

The same may be also said of the Promise which God made to the *House* that *Solomon* had built and dedicated to him; saying, 'Now mine Eyes shall be open, and mine Ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.' 2 *Chron.* vii. 15. For though this *promise* was first made to *that House* particularly; yet in that, it was designed for all such Places as should be dedicated to God, as that was. As God having said to *Joshua*, 'I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee,' *Josh.* i. 5. the Apostle from thence infers, that we may *boldly* say, 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what Man shall do unto me,' *Heb.* xiii. 6. So here, The Lord having said to *Solomon*, 'Mine Ears shall be attent to the prayer that is made in this Place,' we may *boldly* say, the Lord hath a particular respect to *places devoted* to his Service, and will in a peculiar manner hear and accept the *Prayers* which we make in them.

Now seeing there are such *special Promises* made to prayers *publickly* performed by several

Hence publick Persons together in God's own *House*;
 Prayers preferred we therefore ought to have a special
 before private regard to such Prayers, and a special
 Trust and Confidence, that God, according to the
 said *promises*, will in a special manner hear them,
 and grant what we there prayed for together.
 And then he will certainly do it, as the Saints of
 God in all Ages have found by Experience: And
 therefore have always preferr'd the *publick* before
private

private Devotions. And if they could not be bodily present with them, while ^{God's acceptance} their Brethren were at their *publick* ^{of publick prayer,} *Devotions* in *God's House*, yet, they ^{or even Prayers} ^{made at the pub-} had such a respect to them, that ^{lick Hour.} they would *pray* at the same Time, and so join with them in their Souls, altho' they could not do it with their Bodies. There are many Instances of this in the Holy Scripture: And some wherein *God* himself was pleased in a *wonderful manner* to signify his Approbation of it. It was at the *Evening Sacrifice*, the time of *publick prayer*, that *Ezra* made that *solemn Prayer*, which was so highly approved of, as to be made part of the *canonical scriptures*, *Ezra* ix. 5. It was the Time of the offering the *Evening Sacrifice* at *Jerusalem*, that *Elijah* the Prophet, at *Mount Carmel*, prayed so effectually, that, ' the Fire of the Lord fell, and ' consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the Wood, ' and the stone, and the dust, and lick'd up the ' water that was in the Trench, which he had ' there made, to the confirming of the People in ' the Worship of the True God,' 1. *Kings* xviii. 29, 38. It was about the Time of the *Evening Oblation*, that *Daniel* was praying when the Angel *Gabriel* was sent to acquaint him with the precise Time of the *Messiah's* coming, *Dan.* ix. 21. And if we may believe an *Apocriphal Book*, it was *about the time that the Incense of that Evening was offered at Jerusalem, in the House of the Lord*, that *Judith* prayed at *Bethulia*, so as to overcome that vast Army which then lay before the Place, *Judith* ix. 1. Before it was at the *ninth Hour*, the Hour of *publick Prayer*, that *Cornelius* was

praying in his House when an *Angel* was sent to acquaint him, that his *Prayers and his Alms were come up for a Memorial before God*, and to direct him how to come to the Knowledge of Christ, and so into the way of Salvation, *Acts* x. 3. 30.

It was not certainly for nothing, that it is particularly noted, that these Prayers were made by such eminent Saints at the Time of *Evening Sacrifice*, or which is the same, at the *ninth Hour*, the Hour of *publick* Prayer. Neither do I see any reason why such a Circumstance should be so often left upon *Record*, but that we should learn thereby, that God hath a particular Respect, according to his Promise, to the *publick Devotions* which his People perform together to him, so as to hear also the *prayers* which are made at the same time by others, who join with them in their Hearts, though they cannot any other way.

As *David* also did, when praying in *private*, or at some distance from the *Temple*; he said to God, 'Let my Prayer be set forth before thee as Incense, and the lifting up of my Hands as the Evening sacrifice,' *Psal.* cxli. 2. Where we may observe, that in this, as well as in all the Places before quoted; not the *Morning*, but the *Evening Sacrifice* is particularly named; because, as I suppose, that was the *greater* Sacrifice of the two, as being offered at the *same Hour* wherein the Death of Christ, typified by it, was actually accomplished; and for that Reason also no Sacrifice was to be offered after that. And here we may likewise observe how great Esteem *David* had for the *publick* Service at the *Temple*, and how much he preferred it before his own *private Prayer*, in that
he

he had not only an Eye to it while he prayed, and so joined as well as he could in it, but he desired that his *private* Prayer might be like to that, or as acceptable as that was to God.

But the more pleasing any Duty is to God, the more profitable it is to those who do it. And therefore he having so often, both *Publick Prayer* by Word and Deed, manifested himself well pleased with the *publick* or *advantageous to Church and State.* common Service which his People perform to him, we cannot doubt but that they always receive proportionable Advantage from it. The *Jews* called *stated publick Prayers Stations*, and have a Saying among them, *That without such Stations the World could not stand.* Be sure no People have any ground to expect *publick* Peace and Tranquility, without praising and praying *publickly* unto him, who alone can give it. But if all the People, (suppose of this Nation) should every Day with one Heart and Mouth join together in our common Supplications to Almighty God, how happy should we then be? How free from Danger? How safe and secure under his Protection. This is the Argument which Christ himself useth, why *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint*; in the Parable of the unjust Judge, who was at last prevailed with to grant a Widow's Request, merely by her importunity in asking it. 'And shall 'not God, *saieth he*, avenge his own Elect, which 'cry Day and Night unto him, tho' he bear long 'with them? I tell you he will avenge them 'speedily, *But then he adds*, Nevertheless when 'the Son of Man cometh, shall he find Faith on 'the Earth?' *Luke xviii. 7. 8.* As if he had said,

said, God will most certainly avenge and protect those who cry Day and Night, *Morning* and *Evening* to him. But Men will not believe this; and that is the Reason why they are so few who believe that he will hear their Prayers, according to his Promise. But blessed be God, tho' they be but few, there are some who really believe God's Word, and accordingly *pray* every *Morning* and *Evening*, not only for themselves, but for the Country where they live, for all their Governors both in *Church* and *State*, and for all Sorts and Conditions of Men among us. To these the whole Kingdom is beholden for its Support and Preservation. If they should once fail, I know not what would become of us. But so long as there are pious and devout Persons crying Day and Night to God for Aid and Defence against our Enemies, we need not fear any hurt they can ever do us; at least, according to God's ordinary Course of dealing in the World. I know that

Unless God be he is sometimes so highly incensed
highly incensed against a People, that he will hear-
against a People. ken to no Intercessions for them.

As when he said of the Idolatrous and Factious *Jews*, 'though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before me, yet my Mind could not be towards this 'People' *Jer.* xv. 1. ' *Moses* had before diverted his Wrath from them, *Exod.* xxxii. 11, 12, ' 14, and so had *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* vii. 9. but at ' this Time he saith, Though both of them stood ' before him, and besought him for it, yet he ' would not be reconciled to his People.' Which plainly implies, that this was an *extraordinary* Case, and that he ordinarily us'd to hearken to

the

the Prayers which his faithful Servants, such as *Moses* and *Samuel* were, made to him in Behalf of the People among whom they dwelt: According to that of the Apostle *St. James*, 'The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much,' *Jam. v. 6.* To the same Purpose is that parallel Place in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, where God saith, 'That if a Land sin grievously against him, and he send the Famine, the Sword, the Pestilence, or the like Punishment, to cut off both Man and Beast from it, though these three Men, *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were in it, they should deliver none but their own Souls,' *Ezek. xiv. 14, 16, 18, 20.* But here we may likewise observe, that in such an extraordinary Case as this, which God grant may not be our own e'er long, altho' such righteous Persons by all their Prayers and Tears can deliver none else, yet they themselves shall be delivered. As *Lot* was out of *Sodom*, and the *Christians* at the final Destruction of *Jerusalem*, when Eleven Hundred Thousand *Jews* perish'd (*Joseph. de Bel. Jud. l. 7. c. 17.*) and not one *Christian*, they being all, by the secret Providence of God, convey'd out of the City before the Siege began, *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 5.* Which shews the particular Care of all that believe and serve him. And that one would think is enough to prevail with all that consult their own and others Welfare, to neglect no Opportunities which they can get of serving so great and good a Master all the Ways they can, and particularly by performing their daily Devotions to him. In that they have good Ground to hope that

And even then his care is particular for devout Persons.

that he will *bear* their Prayers for others, but may be sure he will take Care of them, whatsoever happens

Besides these common Benefits which accrue to the Kingdom and Church in general, from the

Publick or common Prayers which are daily performed in it, and to the Persons who perform them as they are
Publick or common Prayer advantageous to Christians in their private Capacities.

Members of the same: There are likewise many others which they thereby receive, every one in his own private Capacity, as he is a *Christian* in general. Especially when they perform these their daily Devotions, according to that excellent Order which our Church hath appointed for them. For by thus *addressing* them-

How! selves every Day to God as their Heavenly Father, they learn to live with an entire Submission to him and Dependance upon him in all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life. By *confessing* their Sins every Day to God, their Hearts are always touched with the Sense of them, and with godly Sorrow and Repentance for them. By having God's *Absolution* of them declared every Day unto them by one of his own *Ministers*, they are confirmed in their Hopes of Pardon by the Blood of Christ. By *praising* and *glorifying* Almighty God every Day, their Hearts are cheered, and their Spirits refreshed with the remembrance and recognition of his Glory and Goodness towards them, as *David's* was, when he said, ' My Soul shall be satisfied even as it was ' with Marrow and Fatness, when my Mouth ' praiseth thee with joyful Lips,' *Psal.* lxxiii. 5. By *bearing* some Part of God's holy Word read
 to

to them every Day, they are constantly put in Mind of their Duty to him, what he would have them to believe and do, which otherwise they might be apt to forget. By *repeating* the Apostles Creed every Day, wherein all the fundamental Articles of our Christian Religion are comprehended, they are kept firm and stedfast in the true Faith of Christ. By *praying* every Day for *Pardon*, and *Peace*, and *Grace*, and all Things necessary both for this Life and the next, they have the Word and Promise of God himself continually engaged to grant them, and therefore may be always confident that they shall have them. By approaching every Day into God's special Presence, and there conversing with him according to his own Ordinance and Appointment, they live always with a quick Sense of God upon their Minds, and under the Influences of his Holy Spirit to assist and direct them in all their Ways.

But why do I offer at shewing the many and great Advantages which arise from the daily frequenting the *publick* Prayers of the Church, with that Attention, Faith, Reverence, and Devotion, which is requisite to so divine a Duty; when they are so many and so great that no Man is able fully to describe them, nor can any conceive aright of them, but only they who by reason of use *have their Senses exercised to discern them*? They find by experience, that next to the *frequent receiving* of the *Lord's Supper*, this is the most effectual means they can use, whereby to keep their Minds always in a truly pious and Christian Temper. And therefore are ready on all Occasions to attest it, *not only with their Lips, but also in their Lives*

and Actions. And I cannot but wonder that People should slight those Holy Exercises which they reap so much Profit from, and feel so much Pleasure and Delight in. Whereas on the other side, they who never go to the *Prayers* at all, or but very seldom, and so never receive any Benefit from them to themselves, they wonder as much how others should receive any; if they be not sometimes tempted also to say or think, with those Sons of *Belial* in *Job*, 'What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?' *Job* xxi. 15. I hope there are not many who really think so; but I am sure that most Men act as if they thought that there is nothing to be got by *serving God*, or *praying* to him. For all Men naturally desire that which will bring them in any *profit* or *Advantage*, and lay out themselves *wholly* for the obtaining of it. And therefore if they believed that the *serving God* would do that, they would need no other Arguments to persuade them to it. If every Man that came to *Prayers* could be sure to get but One Shilling for every Time he came, I am apt to think that all the *Churches* where there are *daily Prayers*, would be every Day as full as they can hold, both *Morning* and *Evening*. But the Mischief is, the *profit* which is to be had there, is of another Nature, and such as they can't fancy to be any *profit* at all; in that they are not as they think, made richer by it in the things pertaining to this Life. Though that also is a great Mistake: For *Godliness*, or the worshipping and serving God, 'hath the Promise
of

‘ of the Life that now is, as well as of that which
 ‘ is to come,’ 1 *Tim.* iv, 8. But howsoever, this
 being only in Promise, not in present Payment,
 they cannot get into their Heads that it is worth
 their while to look after it. And as for the *other*
World, which the *Promises* respect, Because Men think
 the Benefits of it re-
 spect not this world
 they have no Sense of that upon their
 Minds, or at least not enough to
 overballance their Cares for this. And though
 Men may pretend a thousand little Excuses for
 their neglecting the *publick Service* of God, this
 still lies at the *bottom* of them all. They do not
 really believe that they can get so much by that,
 as they may by doing something else. If they
 did, our *Churches* would be all as full as the *Ex-
 change* is every Day in the Week. Whereas we
 find the contrary by *sad* and *daily experience*;
 insomuch that in this *great* and *populous City*,
 which professeth *Religion* as much, if not more
 than any City in the World, to our Shame be it
 spoken, there is scarce one in an hundred, that
 take any more Notice of God and his Service, than
 as if they had *no God* to serve all the Week long.
 And that which is worst of all, they are not sen-
 sible that it is a Fault, and so cannot repent of it.
 Tho’ St. *Peter* and St. *John*, and such great Saints
 used to go every Day to Church at the *Hours of*
Prayer, they do not look upon themselves as
bound to do so, for several Reasons which they
 know, but do not care to tell them. And they
 do wisely in keeping them to themselves: For
 they may perhaps make a shift to satisfy them-
 selves at present with them: But I fear they can
 never satisfy others nor themselves neither at the

last Day, much less the *Judge* of the *whole World*. It would be very well if they could: But so far as we can guess at them, if we examine them but by the little Light we have in this World, we may easily see into the Vanity and Weakness of them.

This therefore is that which I shall now endeavour to do. Not that I can pretend to search

The Pretences examined which are usually assign'd for the Neglect of publick Devotions into all the *Reasons*, if they may be so called, which keep Men from our *daily Prayers*. Some, I believe, have none but their *own Wills*; with

such it would be in vain to argue. But they which have any *shadow* of *Reason* for it, tho' some have

1. *Wilfulness*. *one*, some *another*, as they themselves best know; yet I humbly conceive they may all be *reduced* to these *following Heads*, which I shall now consider.

First, Therefore some will not come to our Prayers, because as they pretend, they do not *like* them. But why *do not* they like them? Is there

2. *Disrelifh*. any thing in them contrary to the *Word of God*, or unbecoming his Service? That most of them be sure can't say, for they never *read* nor *heard* them in their Lives, nor are suffered to do it, by those which have Power, over them, lest they *should* see, as they certainly *would*, their *Error* or *Mistake*. And they who have sometimes perhaps *read* or *heard* them, if they would but impartially examine them by God's *Revealed Will*, cannot but acknowledge them to be *exactly consonant* and *agreeable* to it? And some of them have testified the same, by joining with them *upon Occasion*, which, it is supposed, they would never have done, if they thought it
unlawful;

unlawful; as it must needs be, if there be any thing in them *contrary* to *God's Word*. But why then do they not do it often? Why not *every Day*? The great Reason which they pretend is, because our *Prayers* are *read out of a Book*; and they had rather hear a Man *pray* by Heart and *Extempore*, which they think to be more edifying; but the contrary to that hath been often *demonstrated* beyond all *Contradiction*; together with the many and great Inconveniences which usually follow upon such *private extempore* Prayers in *publick*, not to be suffered in the Church of Christ, as they never were in any Part of it 'till of late Years, and then too no where else but in this Island. And therefore at present I would *only* desire *those*, who separate from our *publick* Prayers, not out of *Humour* or *Faction*, but merely out of an *erroneous* and *misguided* Conscience, of which sort I hope there are *some*, I would desire such to consider, whether the great Promise which our Saviour hath made to *publick* Prayers, can possibly be applied to their way of *praying*. To me it seems impossible, in that they do not perform the *Condition* required in it. The Promise I *mentioned* before; it runs thus: 'Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on Earth touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven,' *Matth. xviii. 19.* It is plain that this Promise belongs to *publick* Prayers, such as are made by several Persons together, at the least by *two*: And it is as plain also, that it belongs to *publick* Prayers,

For want of Edification.

Confuted by Arguments against extempore Prayer.

Especially from our Saviour's Promise to them who pray at all.

Prayers, wherein those several Persons *agree* together *before-hand* what they shall ask or pray for. But where the *Minister* useth only an *Ex-tempore* Prayer, how many People soever may be present at it, there are *no Two* of them who agree what they shall ask: That is left wholly to the *Minister*, none of the People so much as knowing what he intends to ask; nor he himself neither, before he hath asked it. They may perhaps agree to it after they hear it, and perhaps not. But if they do, that is not the Thing which the Promise requires: For it is made only to those who *agree* touching any thing that they shall ask; and so requires a previous Agreement upon the Matter of our *publick* Prayers, before we put them up to *Almighty God*; which they who use *Ex-temporary* Prayers, can by no Means pretend to, nor by Consequence to this great Promise of *God's* granting what they ask.

But now in the *publick* Prayers of the Church, we keep close to the *Condition* of the Promise: We ask nothing but what we all agree beforehand

The Condition shall be asked. All the *Clergy* in of which is observed in the Church *England* by the *Procurators* in *Convocation*, and all the *Commons* by their *Representatives* in *Parliament*, agreed together touching every thing that should be *asked* every Day in the Year: And so do all that come to the Prayers; they all know before what shall be then asked, and *accordingly* agree in the asking of it; and therefore have *sure Ground* to believe, that God, according to his Promise will do it for them.

These *Words* of our Saviour might be further improved, to shew, not only the *Lawfulness*, but the *Necessity* of Set-Forms of Prayer in the publick Service of God. But I suppose there are *none* here present, but who are satisfied already in that; and therefore shall *only* add, that they who pretend this to be the *Reason* why they do not join with us in our *daily* Prayers, because they like those in private *Congregations* better, at the same time give us too much Cause to suspect, that there is something else at the *Bottom*: For if that was all, they would have those which they call *publick* Prayers every Day in their *own* Way; or at least would come to *ours* when they have none of their *own*; which they never do, and so perform *no sort* of publick Service to God upon the Week Days; which, how they will answer at the last Day, for my Part I know not; but if they do, it will be very well.

There are others, who have a more plausible Excuse for their not assisting at the *publick*, because they daily perform their *private Devotions* according to Christ's own Command, saying, 'And when thou prayest thou shalt not be as the Hypocrites; for they love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the Corners of the Streets, that they may be seen of Men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their Reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy Closet, and when thou hast shut the Door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly,' *Matth. vi. 5. 6.* But

And argues not only the Lawfulness but Necessity of Set-Forms in publick Worship.

3. Daily Use of private Prayer.

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in these Words our Saviour is so far from excusing us from *publick* Prayers, that he only directs From *St. Mark* vi. us how to *perform* them aright; 5, 6. *misunderstood* that we must not *pray* as the Hypocritical *Pharisees* did, only *to be seen of Men*, and so make that the End of their *publick* Prayers; which were ordained, and therefore ought to be *performed*, not for *our own*, but for *God's Honour and Glory*. And whosoever performs them only *to be seen of Men*, they have their *Reward* they looked for, even the Applause of Men; but they have no ground to expect any Reward from *God*, who never accepts any Services, but such as are performed out of sincere Obedience to his Laws, and for the *Honour* of his Name. And therefore he that would pray acceptably to God, as he must often pray secretly in his Closet, where he cannot have the Applause of Men in his Eye, because none seeth him but God: So even in his *publick* Prayers he must act with the same sincere Intentions as if he was in *private*, aiming sincerely at the Glory of God, as the great End for which *publick* Prayers were ordained, and to which they conduce much more than our *private* can; for in private none sees us but God; but in *publick*, tho' we must not *pray* therefore that Men may see us, yet we cannot *pray*, but some will see us acknowledging God's *Goodness*, and imploring his *Mercy* to us, which is much for his *Honour and Glory*: According to that remarkable Saying of our blessed Saviour, 'Let your Light so shine before Men, ' that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven,' *Matth.* v. 16.

Wherefore

Wherefore they, who sincerely desire to observe all Christ's *Commands*, as becometh good Christians; they must make Conscience of praying *often*, every one in his *Closet*, or by himself. But they must not look upon themselves as thereby excused from praying also *publickly*, as often as they have Opportunity: For that also, as I have shewn, is elsewhere commanded by him. But rather, if they happen to be brought into such a streight, that it is *morally impossible* for them to perform *both*; they must prefer the *publick* before their *private Devotions*; and in *both*, must take special Care to act with that *Simplicity and Godly Sincerity*, as becometh those who have to do with an All-seeing God, who hates nothing more than *Hypocrisy* and *Deceit*.

The same may be said of those Prayers which are, or ought to be performed in every Family apart, and by itself, as the great means whereby to keep up the Sense of God in it, and to have his Blessing always upon it. For which Purpose the *Common Prayer* is certainly the best that can be used, as it may all be, except the *Absolution*, by any Master of a Family; who by this means may in a great Measure, as to his own Family, supply the Want of the *publick* Prayers of the Church where they cannot be had; but where they may, these *Family Prayers* should not hinder, but rather make Way for them, by fitting the Members of each Family better for the *more solemn* Service of God, in the publick Congregation. It cannot be doubted, but that St. *Peter* and St. *John* prayed both in their Closets, and in their Families every Day; and yet for all that,

I

They

They went up together into the Temple, at the Hour of Prayer.

Another Excuse that Men *commonly* make unto
 4. Observation of themselves for their neglecting of
 the Lord's Day. our daily Prayers, is, because God,
 as they say, hath given them *six* Days to labour in,
 and hath reserved only *One* for himself; therefore
 now called *His* or the *Lord's Day*. But that they
 solemnly observe, by joining with the *Congregation*
 in his publick Service; and therefore do not think
 themselves obliged to *do so* upon other Days also,
 whereon God doth not only permit, but require
 them to follow their respective Callings for the
 Maintenance of themselves and Families. It is true,
 he doth so: But it doth not from thence follow,
 that they need not serve God upon *those* Days as
 well as upon *his own*. His Day ought to be spent
wholly in his Service, and *no other* Business to be
 done upon it, which may as well be done *another*
 Day. Upon *other* Days Men may and ought to
 mind their particular Callings, as well as their *pub-
 lick Devotions*; But still *these* ought to be minded
 as well as those. No People were ever more strictly
commanded to keep the Sabbath than the *Jews* were;
 yet they were *commanded* also to serve God *publickly*
 twice every Day, by offering a *Sacrifice* together
 with their *Prayers* every *Morning* and *Evening* in
 the Week. To which there were only *two more*
 extraordinarily added upon the *Sabbath*. And we
 certainly are as much *bound* to offer up our *Prayers*
 and *Praises* unto God, as they were to offer up
 their *Sacrifices* every Day. Otherwise our *Religi-
 on*, in the very Point of *Devotion*, wou'd come
short of theirs, which cannot be supposed without
 great

great Absurdity, by any that understand it, and know the Author of it.

But the Vanity of this Excuse appears sufficiently from what I have *discoursed* before, concerning the *Necessity* and *Advantage* of Daily Prayers; and therefore shall say *no more* to it here, but that they who never *perform* their *publick Devotions* unto God, but upon his *own Day*, will hardly do it well then: And that all who desire in *good earnest* to keep the *Lord's Day* as they ought, must go to Church at the *Hour of Prayer*, every Day in the Week if they can.

But some perhaps may say, they cannot do it. They can't spare so much *time* as that requires, from their *wordly Business*, upon the 5. Want of Time. Week-days, without apparent Danger of ruining themselves and Families. Some perhaps may say this: I am sure all cannot. There are many in and about this City and in the Country too, who have no *wordly Business* to do, or at least do none all the Week long. To them every Day is a *Sabbath*, a Day of Rest, wherein they have nothing else to do, but to serve him who hath given them much Leisure on Purpose that they might do it. They keep *Holiday* every Day, and therefore shou'd keep every Day *Holy*, or at least so much of it as is necessary for the Offering up their *publick Prayers* and *Praises* unto God who hath so liberally *provided* for them. Otherwise the Time that he hath given them will be spent to little Purpose, and their Estates, if *possible*, to less. For they will be so far from doing them *any good*, that they will but increase their Misery, if not in this World, as they often do, yet most certainly in the next. And

as for such among you as follow some particular *Calling*, I must acknowledge it is no more than what you *may* and *ought to do*, so far as it is necessary for the Maintenance of *yourselves*, and those of your *own House*, and for your being better able to *relieve* others, and to *do good* in the World. But I don't think that you can be therefore excused from attending *daily* upon the *publick Worship* of God, as often as you can; I say as often as you can: For I *know* things may sometimes fall out so that you cannot do it without very great Inconvenience. And at such Times I humbly conceive, you may lawfully be absent without any Scruple. But I speak only of the general Course of a Man's Life. As it is said of our blessed Saviour, that being at *Nazareth*, *he went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day, as his Custom was*, Luke iv. 16. so it *ought* to be your usual *Custom* to go every Day to Church at the *Hours of Prayer*, notwithstanding any ordinary Business which you may have to do in the mean Time; as I doubt not but *you yourselves* will acknowledge, if you will but *seriously consider* these few Things:

First, consider, That ye have *Souls* as well as *Bodies*, to take care of every Day in the Year,

Answered by a and *another World* to provide for as few Considerations well as this; an eternal *World*, were ye must live in Happiness or Misery for ever. And therefore it would be the Height of Folly and Madness to suffer the ordinary Affairs of this Life to hinder you from using the means whereby to obtain Grace and Salvation in the next.

Consider also, that you neither have, nor can have any thing but what you receive from God. It is only his Blessing that *maketh rich*, Prov. x. 22.

And

And the Way to have that, is, to *seek* it *daily* of him, and to prefer your Duty to him before all things else; without which, you have no *Ground* to expect it. But by this Means you can't fail of it; for you have his *own Word* for it, *Mat. vi. 33.*

Again, *Consider*, you can never get *Hurt* by *doing Good*, nor lose any Thing by *serving God*, except that which is better *lost* than *found*. Whilst you are sincerely *Praying to*, or *Praising* him who orders all Things in the World, you may be confident, that whatsoever happens to you at that Time, shall one Way or other turn to *your Good*; or at least no real Evil shall befall you. As you see in the Children of *Israel*, all their Men met together by God's Command, at *Jerusalem*, at *three* certain Times every Year; whereby the whole Land was left naked and open, without any Defence at those Times against their Enemies *round about*. And yet it is very observable, none ever invaded it, nor ever so much as attempted to do it at any of those Times when they were met together before God: As he himself had promised, saying, 'Neither shall any Man desire thy Land when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord, thrice in the Year, *Exod. xxxiv. 23. 24.*'

Furthermore, *Consider*, None of you, I believe, are so busy all the Day long in your Trades, but you can find Time to visit a Friend; and what better Friend can you visit than him, *who loved you, and gave himself for you?* None of you but can find Time to go from your *own* into your *Neighbour's*, or perhaps a *Publick House*, and there
continue

continue perhaps an *Hour* or *two* together: And what *House* can you go to better than *God's*? *His House of Publick Prayer*? And where can you spend an *Hour* or *two* in a *Day* better than there? *None* of you but can find some *Time* every *Day* to converse with one *Company* or other, either about *News* or *Business* no *Way* relating to your *Trades*. And what better *Company* can you keep? Whom can you *converse* with better, than him who *governs* and *overrules* all the *Occurrences* of the *World*? And what better *News* can you hear, than that which is publicly read to you out of his *Holy Word*, by one of his *own* *Officers*? *None* of you but can find *Time* every *Day*, when tired with *Business*, to *divert* yourselves with some *Recreation* or other. And where can you find better *Diversions*? How can you recreate your *Spirits* better, than as the *glorified* *Saints* and *Angels* do, by praising, admiring, adoring the *Eternal God*, the *Lamb that sitteth upon the Throne in Heaven*? In short, if you have no time, for a *whole Day* together, to mind any thing else but your particular *Calling*, I heartily pity you: If you have, I am sure you can no way spend it better, than by *going into the House of God at the Hour of Prayer*.

And besides, you, who fear that you may lose
 9, Loss of tem- something by it, I desire you to con-
 poral Things. sider how much you may lose un-
 less you go. If *Anna* the *Prophetess* had not been
 in the *House of God* at the *Hour of Prayer*, when
Christ was first brought thither, she had lost the
 sight of her *Saviour*, the most blessed sight that e-
 ver *Mortal* saw. *Luke* ii. 37, 38. If *St. Paul*
 had not been *praying in the Temple*, he had lost
 that

that *Heavenly Trance*, or Extacy, wherein Christ himself appeared and spake to him, *Acts* xxii. 17. If St *Peter* and St *John*, had not gone into the Temple at the Hour of Prayer, they had lost the happy Opportunity of working a great Miracle, and of converting about five thousand Persons, to the Faith of Christ. And those five thousand Persons, if they had not been there at that time, they might have lost their Souls, and have been undone for ever. So here, suppose you should happen to lose something by leaving your Shops or Trades a while to come to Church, and serve God there, you may lose ten times more, yea, ten thousand times more by not doing of it. The utmost that you can lose by coming to Church, is only the taking or getting a little Money, which may do you more hurt than good. But by not coming, you will lose the Pleasure of praising and magnifying him that made you: You will lose the Honour of conversing with him at his own House, and in his most special presence; you will lose the Profit you might receive from his holy Word there read; you will lose the Benefit of all the Prayers which are there made; you may lose the Love and Favour of God, and his Blessing upon what you have; you may lose that clear Sight and Sense of his Divine Goodness, which he has often been pleased to give his People, by lifting up the Light of his countenance upon them while they are before him; you will lose the Satisfaction of having done your Duty and pleased God. Indeed, you may lose you know not what, nor ever will know 'till you cast up your Accounts at the last Day, and state your Profit and Loss impartially on both sides.

Then

Then you will clearly see, that the *Losses*, which you sustained by the Neglect of your daily Devotions, were infinite and inestimable, and that all the Profits you got by it, were meer Cyphers, signifying nothing at all.

Next to this, you may consider also, that you are so happy, as to live in a Place, where the *Prayers* are read most Hours of the Day : So that if you cannot order your Affairs so as to go at one Hour, you may go at another. And both *Morning and Evening Prayer* do not take up much above *an Hour* or an Hour and a half in a Day ; and it is much if you cannot find so much Time in a whole Day wherein to *serve* and *worship* him, who gives you all the time you have. And if some of a Family happen to be so necessarily employ'd for a whole Day together, that they cannot, yet it is rare but others may be spared to go to Church at the *Hours of Prayer*. There is no Master or Mistress of a Family, but may, if they cannot come themselves, at least send some that belong to them, that so the *Family* may have some share in our Prayers if they will. They that will not do so much as that, have little Cause to pretend any love to God, to Christ, to their own, or to any other Souls, that he hath purchased with his own Blood.

Above all, consider the great End of your coming into, and living in the World. God did not make you only to *eat* and *drink*, much less to *moil* and *toil* for *Food* and *Rayment*. It is true, he having made such things necessary for the Preservation of your Life, he doth not only *permit*, but *require* you to make use of all lawful Means
for

for the getting of them. But still they are only the *Means* not the *End* of your Living. And as you do not live only to *eat*, but you *eat* to *live*: So you live not for your own Sakes, but for his who gives you Life; even for the sake of God, who gave you Life, at first by his Word without any Means, and still *continues* it to you by the same *Word* in the use of the *foresaid* Means, and all for *himself*, for his own *Honour and Glory*. Which therefore is, or ought to be the great *End* of your *eating and drinking*, and of all and every *Action* of your whole Life. As we learn from his Apostle, saying, *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God*, 1. Cor. x, 3. This therefore is the Great *End* of your coming into the World, and the great *Work* you have to do in it, even to *promote* his *Glory* all you can. But in doing this *Work*, you will also *work out your own Salvation*: For it hath pleased God of his infinite Goodness, to join your *Works* and your *Ways*, his *Glory* and your *Happiness* so inseparably together, that you cannot do one without the other; nor attain either but ye shall have both. So far as ye advance *God's Glory*, so far ye advance your own *Happiness*. If you *glorify* him, he will *glorify* you, though not for any *Virtue* or *Merit* there is in any thing you do for him, all you do being infinitely short of what you owe him; yet by the *Merits* of that Death which his Son hath suffer'd, and by *Virtue* of that *Intercession* he always makes for those who finish the *Work* which he hath given them to do, even *glorify God in the World*.

Wherefore, as ever you desire, as I *hope* you all do, not to live in vain, and to *no purpose*, but to

do the *Work* which we were sent hither about ; you must make it your chief Care and Study every Day and neglect no *Opportunities*, that ye can get, of promoting the Glory of God, and in that your *own* Happiness. But there in nothing you can do every Day that conduceth *more* to that End, than our *publick Devotions* : For by them, as I have shewn already, we both set forth God's Glory, and forward *our own* Salvation. And therefore they ought in *Reason* as well as *Duty*, to be preferred before your ordinary Affairs, as being of *more consequence* to the main End of your Living, than any thing else that you commonly do. In other Cases you yourselves always make lesser Busineses give way to greater. At any time you'll neglect the getting a Penny, rather than lose a Pound. And whatsoever Work you have upon your Hands you'll lay it aside to feed your *Bodies*, your *frail* and *mortal Bodies*, two or three times a Day, because you think *that* to be more necessary Work. And do not you think it as necessary to take care of your *Souls* as of your *Bodies* ? and to *serve* God, as to *feed* yourselves every Day : Yea, is not this *the better Part ? the one thing needful ?* I am sure you cannot deny it ; for Christ himself hath said it, *Luke x. 42*. And therefore you can't but acknowledge, that this ought to be done in the first Place. So that all the *common Affairs* of this Life ought both in *Reason* and *Conscience* to give place, as much as is possible, to your *serving God*, so as that *your Souls* may live and be happy for ever.

If you would but keep these things always in your Mind, you would never suffer any slight *Occasion* to keep you either from your *private* or *publick*

lick Devotions: You would not consider whether you can *spare time* from minding the *World* to serve God, but whether you can *spare time* from *serving* God to *mind* the World; not what you may *lose* by going to Church, but what you may *lose* by staying at *Home*: And so would need no other *Monitor* to put you every Day in Mind of going to the *House of God*, as the Apostles did, *at the Hour of Prayer*.

But after all, I fear there are but few will do it; but few of *those* also who have *now* heard it to be their Duty. They think it *enough* that they have been *bearing*, as for *practising*, that they do not love to think of. But I heartily wish that such Hearers would consider what St *Paul* saith: "Not the Hearers of the Law are just before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified, *Rom. ii. 13.*" What St *James* saith, "Be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only, deceiving your own selves, *Jam. i. 22.*" What Christ himself saith, "that Servant which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many Stripes, *Luke xii. 47.*" and what they themselves can say for themselves at the last Day. I am sure they cannot plead Ignorance; for they have been now sufficiently *told* of it. And what *other* Excuses they can make besides *those* which have been already answered, I can't imagine, except it be *one* which is not worth answering; but that it will give us *Occasion* to explain the Way and Manner of *performing* our *daily Devotions* aright to God's *Glory*, and our own *good*. And for that Purpose it may not be amiss to take Notice of it. In

short, therefore, it is this : Some perhaps may say,

7. Want of E- that they have been sometimes at their
dification. daily Prayers, but never found them-
selves any *better* for it, and therefore don't think
it worth their while to go any more.

This, I must confess, may seem a notable Ar-
gument to such as measure their Duty only by
their *Profit* ; and think it not worth their while to
do any thing for God, unless they can get some-
thing to themselves by it. But I would have
such to know, that God is their Maker ; and
they are therefore bound to do what he Com-
mands, whether they can get any thing by it or
no. If he gives them any thing, they must
thank him for it : For they are still but *unprofi-
table Servants*, they have done no more than what
was their *Duty to do*, Luke xvii. 10. nor so

Answered by an much, if they do it only for their
Account of the own *Advantage*. For it is *their*
Manner how we *Duty*, not only to do what he Com-
are to perform the *Duty*, not only to do what he Com-
publick Devotions. mands, but to do it *therefore*, be-
cause he commands it, in sincere Obedience to
him and his Supreme Authority over all things.
Unless they do that, they have no ground to ex-
pect any thing from him for what they do, but
Wrath and *Judgment* for not doing it as they
ought. And how much soever they do, and how
well soever they do it, he is not obliged to them,
but they to him for it; it being only by his Pow-
er they can do it at all, and by his Grace only
they do it well. And therefore if he consider
them for their doing their Duty to him, they
must ascribe it wholly to his free Grace and Mer-
cy in Jesus Christ, which whether he is pleased
to

to vouchsafe unto them or no, they are still bound to *obey* and *serve* him as much as if he did; and that too, not with respect to their own *Profits*, but to his Will and Pleasure.

I speak not this, as if we could ever *serve God for nought*: For we can never do any thing for him, but it will most certainly redound by his Goodness to our Advantage. But I speak it only to shew the Vanity of this *Excuse* that some Men make for their neglecting the *publick Devotions*, because they have been sometimes at them, but do not perceive themselves any *better* for it. But after all, I am much of their Mind; I do not think that they are, or can be much the better, for attending upon the *publick Worship* of God only *sometimes*. For it is plain, that they who do it only *sometimes*, do it only by the by, when they have no great Matter else to do. They do not make it their Work, or Business, and therefore cannot expect any Reward for it; nor *get* any good at all, much less so much as to be made *better* by it.

The solemn *Praying* and *Praising* God, and *Reading* and *Hearing* his most Holy Word *read*, and so his Divine Will published and declared in his own House, by one of his own *Ministers*, are the Ordinary Means of Grace. But they *work* not by any Virtue inherent in themselves, but by the Power of Christ's *Holy Spirit*, which, according to his Promise, abides continually in his *Church*, assisting and actuating the said Means, when duly administered in it, so as to make them effectual to the End to which they were ordained. And therefore they, who would attain that End, must use

use those Means not only now and then, but constantly, or at least, as often as they can. They must 'watch daily at the Gates of Wisdom, and 'wait at the Posts of her Doors, if ever they desire to be admitted in,' *Prov. viii. 34.* They must live continually under the Influence of God's Holy Spirit, moving upon their Souls, as he did upon the Waters in the Creation, 'till he hath brought them into Order, and *created them again in Jesus Christ unto good Works.* Otherwise they have no ground to expect to be made *New Creatures.* It is not a Man's going in the right Way sometimes, but his walking in it, that will bring him to his Journey's End. Our *publick* Devotions are the Way, the right Way that leads to the Grace of God: But he that would come at the End, so as to have the Grace of God always sufficient for him; he must not only step into this Way sometimes, but he must keep always in it, as much as it is possible, so as to let slip no Opportunity he can get of going to the House of God *at the Hour of Prayer.* Neither is that all; it is not enough to go into the House of God *at the Hour of Prayer,* but when he is there, he must do the Work of that *Time and Place,* and nothing else. He must not stand looking about him, as if he had nothing to do there; neither must he suffer his Thoughts to wander about upon other Things, like those the Prophet speaks of, saying, 'and they come unto thee as 'the People cometh, and they sit before thee as 'my People, and they hear thy Words, but they 'will not do them; for with their Mouth they 'shew much love, but their Heart goeth after
 • their

‘ their Covetousness,’ *Ezek. xxxiii. 31.* Such People had as good be out of the Church as in it, for any good they either do or get there. Indeed they are not wholly in it; only their worser Part their Bodies are there, their Souls are at Home, in their Shops, among their Chapmen or Neighbours, or running about the Country, perhaps as far as the *Indies*, minding their Affairs there. And how can such People expect to be ever the better for being in *God’s House*, when they affront him to his Face, making a shew as if they served him, when really they are about other Business! Yet this is the Case of most of those who go thither only sometimes; not being used to that kind of Work, they don’t know how to set about it, much less to keep their Minds so intent upon it as is necessary to the due Performance of it.

The Work we have to do in *God’s House* is a great Work, the greatest we can ever do; it is God’s own Work, the Work he tells us we do for himself, even to *serve* and *worship*, and *glorify* him, that made our Souls and Bodies; and therefore both our Souls and Bodies must be wholly employed in it. As for our Bodies, he hath given us this general Rule, ‘ Keep thy Foot when ‘ thou goest into the House of God,’ *Eccles. v. 1.* that is, Look to thy Ways, take Care of thy outward Carriage and Deportment: See thou behavest thyself in God’s House as becometh one, who believest himself to be in the Presence of the greatest Person in the World. For so we are whensoever we meet together in God’s House, we are in his *special Presence*. He himself hath said, that *he is in the midst of us*; and therefore

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we are bound to believe it; and to shew we do so, by all such reverent and humble Gestures before him, as we should certainly use, if we saw him with our *bodily* Eyes; especially when we *pray* unto him, we must do it upon our *Knees*, as we should if we put up a Petition but to an Earthly Prince: How much more to the King of all Kings! And when we *praise* his Holy Name, although we do it *standing*, yet that also must be done in such a Posture of Adoration, as may testify that *Fear* and *Reverence* of his Divine Majesty. Some perhaps may think these to be meer

Ceremonies; but I am sure that And what is the *truer religious Wor-* *kneeling and bowing to Almighty* *ship.* God, is that which the Holy Scrip-

tures mean by *worshipping* of him, and therefore forbids us to do it to any in a *religious* Manner, but to the true God. And as this is the Way to *worship* God with our *Bodies*, so it is the means we can use, whereby to keep our *Souls* too in a *pious* and *devout* Temper before him. For by this Means we are all the while put in Mind of that glorious Person we are speaking to, and of the great Work we are about; which otherwise we should be apt to forget: As we have too much cause to fear they do, who speak to God in the same Posture as they do to one another: I say, speak, not *pray*, for that is the Work of the *Heart* as well as of the *Mouth*. And if their Hearts were upon God, while they are speaking to him, I do not see how it is possible for them not to fall down and worship before him.

But we must remember, that 'God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him

we are bound to believe it: and to shew we do so, by all such reverent and humble Gestures before him, as we should certainly use, if we saw him with our *Bodily* Eyes: Especially when we *pray* unto him, we must do it upon our *Knees*, as we should if we put up a Petition but to an Earthly Prince: How much more to the King of Kings! And when we *Praise* his Holy Name, although we do it *standing*, yet that also must be done in such a Posture of Adoration, as may testify that *Fear* and *Reverence* of his Divine Majesty. Some perhaps may think these to be meer *Ceremonies*; but I am sure that *Kneeling* and *Bowing* to Almighty God, is that which the Holy Scriptures mean by *worshipping* of him, and therefore forbids us to do it to any in a *religious* Manner, but to the true God. And as this is the Way to *worship* God with our *Bodies*, so it is a good Method whereby to keep our *Souls* too in a *pious* and *devout* Temper before him. For by this means we are all the while put in Mind of that glorious Person we are speaking to, and of the great Work we are about; which otherwise we should be apt to forget; as we have too much cause to fear they do, who speak to God in the same Posture as they do to one another: I say, speak, not *pray*, for that is the Work of the *Heart* as well as of the *Mouth*. And if their Hearts were upon God, while they are speaking to him, I do not see how it is possible for them not to fall down and worship before him.

But we must remember, that ' God is a Spirit,
' and they that worship him, must worship him

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And what is
the true religious
Worship.

‘in Spirit and Truth,’ *John* iv. 24. that is, at the same Time that they worship God with their *Bodies*, they must do it also in their *Spirits*, without which all their *Bodily Worship* will signify nothing. For *Worship*, properly so called, is nothing else but some outward Sign of our inward Fear of God. But where there is no Fear of God in the *Spirit*, there cannot be truly any outward Sign of it. And therefore such cannot be said to *worship God in Truth*, who do not worship him in their *Spirits* as well as their *Bodies*.

Here then is the great Task we have to do in all our *publick Devotions*, even to keep our *Spirits* or *Hearts* in a right Posture all the while that we are before God, who sees them, and takes special Notice of all their Motions: That we may ‘pray with the Spirit, and pray with the Understanding also, as St. *Paul* did,’ 1 *Cor.* xiv. 15. I call this a *great Task*, because I know it is the hardest Work we have to do. Our *Thoughts* being so very quick and nimble, so unconstant and desultory, that it is difficult to keep them close to the Work we are about, so as to serve the Lord without Distraction. But it is a thing that must be done, if we desire to receive any real *Benefit* and *Comfort* from our Devotions. And blessed be God, by his Assistance we may all do it if we will but set ourselves in good earnest about it, and observe these few Rules, which may be very helpful unto us in it.

First, When you go the House of God *at the Hour of Prayer*, be sure to leave all worldly Cares and Business behind you, entertaining yourselves, as ye go along, with these, or such like

Sentences

Sentences of Scripture: ' Like as ^{Rules for Wor-}
 ' the Hart desireth the Water-brooks, ^{shipping God a-}
 ' so longeth my Soul after thee, O ^{right, in the Church}
 ' God. My Soul is athirst for God, ^{or House of God.}
 ' yea, even the living God. When shall I come
 ' to appear before the Presence of God?' *Psal.*
xlii. 1, 2. ' O how amiable are thy Dwellings,
 ' thou Lord of Hosts! My Soul hath a Desire
 ' and longing to enter into the ^{Ejaculations in}
 ' Courts of the Lord. My Heart ^{going thither.}
 ' and my Flesh rejoice in the living God,' *Psal.*
lxxxiv. 1, 2. ' We will go into his Tabernacle,
 ' and fall low on our Knees before his Footstool,'
Psal. cxxxii. 7.

When you come into the Church, say with
 ' Jacob, How dreadful is this Place! This is
 ' none other but the House of God, ^{In the Church.}
 ' and this is the Gate of Heaven,' *Gen.* xxviii.
 17, or something to that Purpose. And as soon
 as ye can get an Opportunity, prostrate yourselves
 upon your *Knees* before the Master of the House,
 the great God of Heaven, humbly ^{Devout Behavi-}
 beseeching him to unite your Hearts ^{our.}
 unto himself, to cleanse your Thoughts by the
 Inspiration of his Holy Spirit, to open your Eyes,
 and to manifest himself unto you, and to assist
 you with such a Measure of Grace in offering up
 these your *spiritual Sacrifices*, that they be *ac-*
ceptable to him by Jesus Christ.

And now set yourselves in good earnest as in
 God's Sight, keeping your Eye only upon him,
 looking upon him as observing what you think,
 as well as what you say or do, all the while you
 are before him.

While one or more of the *Sentences* out of God's Holy Word, (wherewith we very properly begin

At hearing the our Devotions to him) are *reading*,
 Sentences. apprehend it as spoken by God himself at first, and now repeated in your Ears, to put you in mind of something which he would have you to *believe* or *do* upon this Occasion.

While the *Exhortation* is reading, hearken diligently to it, and take particular Notice of every

Reading the Ex- Word and Expression in it, as con-
 hortation. trived on Purpose to prepare you for the Service of God, by possessing your Minds with a due Sense of his *special Presence* with you, and of the great Ends of your coming before him at this Time.

While you are *confessing* you Sins with your Mouth, be sure to do it also in your Hearts, call-

During the Con- ing to Mind every one as many as
 fession. he can of those particular *Sins* which he hath committed, either by *doing what he ought not to do*, or *not doing what he ought*, so as to repent sincerely of them, and stedfastly resolve never to commit them any more.

While the *Minister* is pronouncing the *Absolution* in the Name of God, every one should lay

On Receiving hold upon it for himself, so as firm-
 Absolution. ly to *believe* that upon true Repentance and Faith in Christ, he is now discharged and *absolved* from all his Sins, as certainly as if God himself had declared it with his own Mouth, as he hath often done it before, and now by his *Minister*.

While you, together with the *Minister*, are repeating the *Psalms* and *Hymns* to the Honour
 and

and Glory of God, observe the *Minister's* Part as well as your own ; and lift up your *Hearts*, together with your *Voices* to the highest Pitch you can, in acknowledging, magnifying, and praising the infinite Wisdom and Power, and Goodness, and Glory of the most high God in all his Works, *the Wonders that he hath done and still doth for the Children of Men*, and for you among the rest.

While God's *Word* is read in any of the Chapters, whether of the *Old* or *New Testament*, ' receive it not as the Word of Men, ' but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God which ' effectually worketh in you that believe,' 1 *Thess.* ii. 13. And therefore *hearken* to it with the same Attention, Reverence and Faith, as you would have done if you had stood by Mount *Sinai*, when God proclaimed the *Law*, and by our Saviour's Side when he published the *Gospel*.

While the *Prayers* or *Collects* are reading, although you ought not to repeat them aloud, to the Disturbance of other People, yet you must repeat them in your Hearts, your Minds accompanying the *Minister* from one *Prayer* to another, and from one Part of each *Prayer* to the other, all along with Affections suitable to the Matter sounding in your Ears, humbly adoring and admiring God according to the Names, Properties, or Works which are attributed to him at the Beginning of each *Prayer*, earnestly desiring the good Things which are asked of him in the Body of it, for yourselves or others; and stedfastly believing in *Jesus Christ* for his granting of them, when he is named, as he is at
the

the End of every Prayer, except that of St. *Chrysostome*; because that is directed immediately to Christ himself, as promising that *when two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will grant their Requests*, which is therefore very properly put at the End of all our *daily Prayers*, and also of the *Litany*, (most Part whereof is directed also to our Saviour, that when we have made all The Blessing given. our *common Supplications* unto him, we may act our *Faith* in him again for God's granting of them according to his said *Promise*; and so may be dismissed with *the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father, and the Communion or Fellowship of the Holy Ghost*; under which are comprehended all the Blessings that we have, or can desire, to make us completely happy both now and for ever.

After the *Blessing* it may be expedient still to continue for some Time upon your *Knees*, hum-

And after the bly beseeching Almighty God to Blessing. pardon what he hath seen amiss in you since you came into his Presence; and that he would be graciously pleased to hear the *Prayers* and to accept of the *Praises* which you have now offered up unto him, through the Merits of *Jesus Christ* our only Mediator and Advocate.

These few *Directions* I thought good to lay before you, as being of great Use towards the right Performance of your *publick Devotions*, so as that they may be both *acceptable* to God, and *profitable* to yourselves. I fear some may think it hard to keep their Minds intent so long together; but they can do it much longer upon worldly Affairs,

and

and therefore may in this too, if A willing Mind they will. If they will. There lies a great help to the main Stress of the Business. If true Devotion. Men will resolve by God's Assistance to fix their Minds upon him and his Service, while they are before him, they may certainly do it in an high Degree; as I do not doubt but many here present have found by their own Experience; such I mean, who have been long accustomed to it. And tho' to others it may seem *difficult* at first, yet by Use it will soon grow easy, if they will be persuaded to make Trial of it, which I heartily wish you would all do. Try a little what it is to go to the House of God *every Day at the Hour of Prayer*, and there to perform your Devotions to him with all your Hearts, as near as you can. Do but use yourselves to it for one Quarter or half a Year; and I dare say you will find it not only easy, but so *pleasant* and *profitable* to your Souls, that you will never leave it off so long as you are able to do it. And tho' you cannot do every thing so well as you would at first, let not that discourage you, but strive to do it as well as you can; and then by his Assistance, who is there *spe- cially present* with you, by Degrees you will overcome all Difficulties, and learn to use those blessed Means of Grace, so as to *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, every Day more and more.

And indeed, unless you do that, you may be confident you do not use them aright. For there are so many Promises made to them by him who cannot lye, that if there be no Failure in the Use, they can never fail of their Effect. Inasmuch
that

that if notwithstanding your frequenting our *daily Prayers*, you shall still continue in any known Sin; if you do not gather Strength to overcome *the World, the Flesh, and the Devil*; if you do not increase in the Knowledge and Love of God; in Temperance, Patience, Meekness, and Humility; in Justice, Charity, and all Manner of Virtue: In short, if you do not live more soberly, more righteously, and more godly in this present World, than otherwise you would; you may be sure, that although you live under the Means of Grace, you do not make that Use of them which you might, and ought to do; though you seem to perform your *Devotions* to God, yet really you do it not. How oft soever your *Bodies* may be at Church, your *Hearts* are always somewhere else. And so you come to no Purpose at all; or rather to very ill Purpose. For this is plainly to mock God, and to play the Hypocrite with him, making as if you had a Mind to *serve* and *glorify* him, when you mind nothing less, but rather to do him all the *Disservice* and *Dis honour* that you can, by giving Occasion to the Enemy to blaspheme his Holy Name, and to think it is to no Purpose to serve God, seeing you, who seem to do it, are as bad as other People.

And a vicious Life
the greatest Disservice
thereto.

And besides, hereby you may discourage many, who otherwise would be inclined to set upon a pious and religious Course of Life. For when they observe any of you, who come to Church every Day, guilty of the same Vices as they who never come at all, they will be tempted to judge that all are so; and by consequence that there is
nothing

nothing in Devotion, but a meer outward Shew and *Appearance* of Religion; and that they who go to Church do it not to serve God, but themselves, to get themselves the Name and Reputation of being pious and godly Men, and under that Cloak to hide their Faults, and commit all Manner of Villainy, as some sort of Men we know of later Years have done, to the Scandal and Reproach of the Christian Religion. So that by this Means your very coming to Church would be more for the *Devil's* Service than for God's. The Devil always had, and always will have a Spight at our *publick* Devotions, and catch at all Opportunities to throw Dirt in their Face, to make them appear as deformed and ugly as they can. And if any of those who frequent God's *House*, and seem to serve him there, should notwithstanding lead wicked and profane Lives, they would promote the same hellish *Design* of bringing Devotion into Contempt and Scorn; and so would do the Devil's Work, and must expect their Wages from him at last.

' But Beloved, we are perswaded better Things
' of you, and things that accompany Salvation,
' though we thus speak,' *Heb. vi.*

9. And although some of those who come to Prayers only now and then, when they have nothing else to do, may perhaps be the Devil's Drudges

Exhortation to all
Members of the
Church of England
that they live as
holily as they pray
devoutly.

in this Matter; yet I can't imagine how they should be so, who make it their Business to serve God publickly every Day. For that must needs give a check to any evil Motions, and leave such a Tincture upon their Minds, that will break and

M

shew

shew itself in all holy Conversation and Godliness. And therefore I speak this only to shew how much it concerns you to take Care how you live, and for that Purpose, how you pray: That your Lives may in all Points, be such as *becometh the Gospel of Christ*; that you may adorn your Profession with all virtuous and good Works; that you may shine as Lights in the World: So that Men may see there is more in going every Day to Church, than they are aware of, and so may be persuaded to follow you thither at the Hour of Prayer.

But for that Purpose, whenever ye go thither, ye must be sure to do the Work you go about as well as possibly you can: For the better you serve God there, the better you will do it every where else; the more serious and hearty you are at your publick Devotions, the more righteous and holy you will be in all Manner of Conversation both towards Gods and towards Men. For as these are in themselves some of those Duties, which we owe to God, so they are the Means too which he hath appointed, whereby to give us Grace to perform all the rest. And the more carefully we use the Means, the more Grace we shall get by them. So that by this Means we may add to our Faith Virtue; and to Virtue Knowledge; and to Knowledge Temperance; and to Temperance Patience; and to Patience Godliness; and to Godliness Brotherly-kindness; and to Brotherly-kindness Charity, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. Neither shall we only add one Grace to another, but also one Degree of every Grace unto another. We shall go from Strength to Strength, till we come in the Unity of the Faith, and the
Know-

- Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect
- Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the
- Fulness of Christ; *Eph. iv. 13.*

This is a great Truth: But I would not have you take it only from me, but from yourselves: And for that Purpose make the Experiment. Take all the Occasions, you can get, of going into the House of God at the *Hours of Prayer*, and to his *Table* when his Supper is there administered, and perform the several *Duties* which are there required of you, with all the Care and Diligence that you can. Do but this, and you will find all that I have said, to be not only true, but short of what you yourselves will feel; and so will be soon convinced by your own Experience, that *Weekly Sacraments*, and *Daily Prayers* are the greatest Blessings you can have on this Side Heaven, and the best Way to bring you thither, through the Merits of *Jesus Christ*. To whom, &c.

I N I S.

M 2

THE



THE GREAT
Necessity and Advantage
OF
Frequent Communion.

I Cor. xi. 26.

For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death 'till he come.

THE *Lord's Death*, here spoken of, is the Death of the Lord, the Almighty and Eternal Son of God; *that Death* The Commemoration of the Death of Christ. which he suffered in the *Nature*, and in the stead of *Mankind* in general, and particularly of us who are here present; *that Death*, whereby he expiated our Sins, and made *compleat Satisfaction* to the Divine Truth and Justice for them: *That Death*, whereby he *appeased* the *Wrath* which he that made us had justly conceived against us, and hath reconciled him again unto us: *That Death*, whereby he delivered us from the Slavery of Sin and Satan, and asserted us into the *glorious Liberty of the Sons of God*: *That Death*

Death, whereby he redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made himself a Curse for us: That Death, whereby he purchased for us both Pardon, and Peace, and Mercy, and Grace, and Power to eschew Evil and do Good; and all the Blessings we can ever have or desire, either in this Word or the next: That Death, by virtue whereof he entred into Heaven, now to appear in the Presence of God for us, and therefore is able to save to the utmost them that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25. This is that Lord's Death which the Apostle here said, we shew, as often as we eat the Bread and drink the Cup he speaks of in the Verses before my Text, where he saith, that the Lord Jesus, the same Night in which he was betrayed, took Bread; and when he had given Thanks; he brake it, and said, take, eat: This is my Body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the Cup, when he had supped saying, this Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. In which Words we have Christ's own Institution of the Sacrament of his Last Supper, together with the End of it declared by himself, saying at the Institution of the Bread *this do in remembrance of me*: And again at the Cup, *this do ye as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me*, that is, (as is signified by the Institution itself) *in remembrance of me*, as dying for the Sins of the World, and your's among the rest. And that this is the great End of this Holy Institution, the Apostle farther proves, and explains in the Words

The End of this Holy Institution of the Sacrament, the Communion, the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper as it is diversly styl'd.

Words of my Text, from this Reason; because hereby we *shew the Lord's Death*: the *Bread* shews the breaking of his Body, the *Cup* shews the shedding of his Blood; and so both together shew the Death he suffered for us. *For as often, saith he, as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.*

In which Words we may first observe, That every time that the *Sacrament* of the Lord's Death is declared at every Administration. Supper is administer'd, his Death is thereby shewn and declared to all that are there present. As when the Jews eat the Paschal Lamb, the Master of the Family declared the Reasons why they eat it with bitter Herbs, and why with unleavened Bread, and the like. So here, when we eat the Bread, and drink the Cup according to Christ's Institution, we thereby declare the Reasons of it, though not by Words, yet by the very Act itself, and the several Circumstances of it. By the Breaking of the Bread, we declare Christ's Body to be broken and wounded to Death: By the Cup, we declare his Blood to be shed, or poured out for the Sins of the World; and by distributing both the Bread and the Cup to each Communicant apart, we declare to every one particularly that Christ died for his Sins, and that he may be saved by Christ's Death, if he will but receive and apply it to himself as he ought by a quick and lively Faith.

In the next place, we may here observe, that the 2. Christ's Death is not repeated, but shewed forth in every administration. Apostle doth not say, that Christ's Death is repeated, or that he is offered up again every time this Sacrament is administered, but only that the Lord's Death

is shewn by it. And therefore that this is not as the Papists absurdly imagine, a Propitiatory Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead, but only commemorative and declarative of that One Sacrifice which Christ once offered to be a Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World. We may here likewise observe, that the Apostle doth not say, as often as ye eat this Bread, ye shew the Lord's Death; but ye do it, as often as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup. And therefore unless both kinds be administered, as Christ's Institution is not observed, so neither is the End of it attained: For his Death is not shewn by one, but both together.

Moreover, we may observe, that the Apostle here plainly calls it Bread, and the Cup or Wine; not the very Body, and Blood of Christ: Yea, he saith, it is Bread we eat, and it is the Cup or Wine we drink; and therefore we do not eat the very Body that hung upon the Cross, nor drink the Blood which was there spilt for us; but only in a Sacramental Sense, which quite overthrows the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

Again, we may from hence observe, that this was no temporary Institution, which was to continue only for some time, but to the End of the World; or as

3. The Commemoration of Christ's Death is not temporary, but to be perpetual.

the Apostle here expresses it, 'till He, our Lord and Saviour, come: As from the Beginning of the World as often as they offered, according to its first Institution, any bloody Sacrifice to God, they thereby foreshewed the Death of Christ, typified by it, until his first coming into the World to save it: So since that time, 'as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ' according to Christ's own Institution

we

we shew forth his Death all along, until his second Coming into the World to judge it. So that it is now by this Sacrament that Mankind is, and always must be, put in mind of their Saviour, and what he suffered for them; and therefore this can never be laid aside, but must continue in the Church to the End of the World. Neither can that be reckoned any Part of Christ's Church, where this his own most Holy Institution is rejected, disused, or never observed as it ought.

Lastly, We may here observe, that as this Sacrament is to continue always in the Church; so it must be often repeated by the same Persons in it. The other Sacrament, even Baptism, is likewise to be always administred in the Church; but it can be administred but once to one and the same Person: But the Apostle here, speaking of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, saith to the same Persons, *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*: And to the same Purpose our Lord himself in the Institution of the Cup, saith, *This do as oft as ye drink it*: Plainly implying, that this should be often done by those who are once admitted into his Church: As a Man can be *born* but once, but when he is *once* born, he must often eat and drink such things as God hath appointed for the Preservation of his Natural Life; so when a Man is *once regenerate*, and born again of *Water* and of the Spirit, he must *often* eat this Bread and drink this Cup, as the great Means appointed by Christ himself for the Preservation of his Spiritual Life; which can never be supported aright without this *Spiritual Food*, no more than the Natural Life can without *Bodily Sustenance*. This

This therefore is that which I intend, by God's Assistance, in a more special Manner to speak to at this time. And it is but time to say all we can of it, when *this Holy Sacrament* Complaint of the general Neglect of the Holy Sacrament. is so generally neglected, as it now is (to our shame be it spoken) all the

Kingdom over. Blessed be God, except some few *Heathens* which are among us, such I mean, as were never yet *baptized*, the Nation in general is *Christian*; the People all profess *Christ's Religion*, and have it established among them by *Civil Laws* and *Sanctions*: They are all admitted into *Christ's Church*, and hope to be saved in it: They all believe him to be the *Only Saviour* of the World, and therefore expect Salvation only from him. They all know too, or at least have heard, that he *instituted* this *Holy Sacrament*, and commanded 'em to receive it in *Remembrance* of him: And yet after all they regard it no more than as if it had never been *Instituted* by him; no more than as if it was no matter whether they ever remembered him or no. I need not go far for Instances. In this Place, where it is as constantly administered, and as much frequented, as in any part of the Kingdom, there are *several* who receive it very seldom; some never, unless it be to qualify them for an Office: Many, a great many I fear, of those who are now present, never yet received it at all: But tho' they be 20, 30, 40, 50 Years old and upwards, yet lived all this while in the Neglect of this *Divine Institution*, having never yet been so much as once at our *Lord's Table*, nor knowing what it is to partake of that blessed *Body* and *Blood* which was broken and shed for them. And so it is in all parts

of the Kingdom; which is a very sad and melancholy Consideration. They who have any Love either for God or their Neighbours, cannot but be grieved at their Hearts to think of it. We have only *One Saviour* in the World, and he hath Instituted only *one Sacrament* to put us in mind of him; and yet that People, that *Christians*, should slight that! What shall I say? I know not how to express their *Folly* and *Ingratitude*, much less the dismal Con-

The Folly and Ingratitude of such Neglect.

sequences of it. But how to remedy it I know not; I have done what I could; I have taken all Occasions to convince you of your Sin and Danger, in neglecting this *Blessed Sacrament*, and to persuade you to a more frequent Receiving of it; but I see nothing will do: Indeed nothing can do but the Almighty Power of God, whom I therefore beseech of his Infinite Mercy, to open Mens Eyes, that they may *see the Things that belong to their everlasting Peace before they be hid from them*. And then I am sure this Sacrament would be as much frequented, as it has been hitherto neglected. But seeing he is usually pleased to do this great Work by the Ministry of his Word, I shall make it my Business at this Time, in his Name to put you in mind of your *Duty* and *Interest* in this particular, and to set before you such Reasons why you ought to take all Opportunities of Receiving the *Mystical Body* and *Blood* of Christ your Saviour, as I hope by his Blessing may prevail with many to do it; God grant it may do so with all that hear me at this Time.

For this Purpose therefore I desire you to consider, " *First*, that this is *Christ's* Reason why *Christians* ought to " own Institution and Command.

" *He*

“ *He* who being in the form of God, receive often.
 “ thought it not Robbery to be e-
 “ qual with God, and yet made himself of no
 “ Reputation for your Sakes. “ *He* who loved you
 so as to give himself for you ; *He*, who laid down
 his own Life to redeem and save I. 'Tis Christ's.
 you; *He*, the very Night before he own Institution and
 died for you , *He* then instituted this Holy Sacra-
 ment ; and *He* then said to all that hoped to be sav-
 ed by him, and to you among others, “ Do this
 “ in remembrance of me. And do this as often as ye
 “ drink it, in remembrance of me : “ What !
 and will you who hope to be sav'd by him, never
 do this at all ? Or only now and then, when per-
 haps you have nothing else to do ? How then can
 ye hope to be saved by him ? Do you think he will
 save you, whether ye observe his *Commands* or no ?
 And which of all his *Commands* can ye ever observe,
 if you do not observe this which is so plain, so easy,
 so useful, and so necessary for you ? No, deceive
 not yourselves, *He* that came into the World and
 died on purpose to save you, you may be confident
 would never have required you to do this, and as
 often as you do it, to remember Him ; but that it
 is necessary for your Salvation that ye do it, and
 that ye do it as often as ye can in remembrance of him,
 And if it had been necessary in no other, as it is in
 many respects, yet his very commanding it, makes
 it so to you and to your Salvation. For as *He* is the
 only “ Author of eternal Salvation, *He* is so only
 “ to those who obey him. *Heb.* v. 9, that is to
 “ those who observe all things whatsoever he hath
 “ commanded, *Matth.* xxviii. 20.” But this is
 one of those things which he hath commanded ;

and therefore unless you *do this*, you do not *obey* him and so have no Ground to expect Salvation from him. He himself hath told you in effect, that he will not save you, in that he said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, *Luke xiii, 3, 5.*" But ye all know that he who lives in any wilful and known Sin, or in the wilful Neglect of any known Duty, he hath not yet repented, and turned to God, but is still in his natural Estate, in a State of Sin and Damnation. And if he happens to die so, he must inevitably perish and there is no Help in the World for it.

Wherefore, my Brethren, you have need to look about you. Christ your Saviour hath expressly *commanded* you often to receive the Sacrament of his Body and Blood *in Remembrance* of him. And therefore you, who never received it, have lived all this while in the wilful Breach of a known Law, and by Consequence in a wilful and known *Sin*: And you who receive it but *Seldom*, do not fully *obey* or come up to the Law which plainly requires you to do it *often*: At least if it may be had. It is true, should God in his Providence Not to be dispens-
ed with. cast you upon a Place where you could not receive it if ye would, I do not doubt but he would accept of your earnest Desires of it, as well as if ye did receive it, and would make up the great Losses you sustained in your Spiritual Estate for want of it, some other way. But blessed be his great Name, this is not your Case: For he in his good Providence hath so ordered it, that you live in a Place where this *Holy Sacrament* is actually celebrated *every Lord's Day*, and may
be

be so every Day, in the Year. Our Church requires the *first*, and hath provided for the other, by ordering that the *same Collect, Epistle and Gospel*, which is appointed for the *Sunday*, shall serve all the Week after: And by consequence the whole *Communion Service*, of which they are a Part. And therefore, unless you *receive* it, and receive it *often* too, you will live in the gross Neglect, if not in a plain Contempt of *Christ's Command*; as you will one Day find to your shame and Sorrow: For how well soever you may otherwise live, this one Sin is enough to ruin and destroy you for ever. For as St. *James* saith, "Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is Guilty of all. *Jam. ii. 10.*" And therefore, whatsoever else you do, if ye do not this, but *offend in this one Point*, you are liable to all the Punishments that are threatned in the Law of God. Neither is there any Way to avoid them, except you repent, turn from this as well as from all other Sins.

And that ye may not think that the *Receiving* of this *Blessed Sacrament* only now and then, as perhaps two or three times a Year, will excuse you from the Imputation of living in the Neglect of *Christ's command*; I desire you to consider, how the *Apostles* themselves and the *Primitive Christians* understood it. Which they sufficiently declared by their Practice. For when our Lord was gone to *Heaven*, and had, according to his Promise, sent down the *Holy Spirit* upon his *Apostles*, and by that Means brought into his Church about 3000 Souls in one Day, it is said of them, "That they continued stedfastly in the A-

How the Apostles and primitive Christians understood the Word *often* in the Institution of the Sacrament.

"postles

“ possles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking
 of Bread, and Prayer, *Acts. ii. 42.* “ and of all
 that believed, it is said, “ That they continuing
 “ daily with one accord in the Temple, and break-
 “ ing of Bread from House to House, did eat
 “ their Meat with gladness and singleness of Heart,
 “ v. 46. “ Where we may observe, *First*, that
 by *breaking of Bread*, in the *New Testament*, is
 always meant the *Administration* of the *Lord's*
Supper. *Secondly*, this they are said to have done,
from House to House, as we translate it; or rather
in the House, as the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Versions
 have it, and as the Phrase is used by the *Apostle*
 himself, *Rom. xvi. 5. 1. or. xvi. 19*, that is,
 they did it either in some *private House*, where
 there was a *Church*, or more probably in some part
 of the *House* or *Chambers* belonging to the Temple,
 where they daily continued. *Thirdly*, as they
 continued daily in *the Temple*, at the *Hours* of
Prayer, to perform their solemn Devotions there,
 so they *daily* received the Holy Sacrament, and
 eat this Spiritual Food *with Gladness and Single-*
ness of Heart: This being indeed the chief
 Part of their Devotions, whensoever they could
 meet together to perform them. Especially on
 the *Lord's Day*, as the *Holy Ghost* himself in-
 forms us, saying, “ And upon the first Day of the
 “ Week, when the Disciples came together to
 “ break bread, Paul preached to them, being
 “ ready to depart on the morrow *Acts xx. 7.* ”
 where we see, they did not only *break Bread*, or
administer the Sacrament of our *Lord's Supper* up-
 on the *first Day* of the Week, which we, from
St. John, call the *Lord's Day*; but upon that Day
 they

they came together for that End and purpose. It is true St. *Paul* being to go away the next Day, he took that Opportunity when they met together for that *End*, to give them a *Sermon*. But that was not the End of their meeting at that Time. They did not come to hear a Sermon, tho' St. *Paul* himself was to preach, but they came together to administer and receive Christ's Mystical Body and Blood, which plainly shews, that this was the great Work they did every *Lord's day*: And that they came together then on purpose to meet with Christ, and to partake of him at his own Table. And seeing that the Law itself required *that none shall appear before the Lord empty*, *Exod. xxiii. 15.* therefore St. *Paul* requires, that upon the *first day* of the Week, when *Christians* thus met together to receive the Sacrament, every one should lay by him in Store, as God prospered him, for *pious* and *charitable* Uses, *1. Cor. xvi. 2.* And hence commenc'd that Custom which is still continued in our Church, and ought to be so in all, That whensoever we appear before the *Lord* at his *own Table*, we, every one according to his *Ability*, offer up something to him, of what he had bestowed upon us, as our Acknowledgment of his *Bounty* to us, in giving us whatsoever we have, and of his infinite Mercy in giving himself for us.

Now seeing the *Apostles* themselves, and such as they first converted and instructed in the Faith of Christ, usually received this Holy Sacrament every day in the Week, and constantly upon the *Lord's Day*; it cannot be doubted, but that they looked upon themselves as oblig'd

That it should be administered and received constantly every Lord's Day, if not usually every Day in the Week.

by

by Christ's Command to do so: And that when he said, *do this as often as ye do it, in remembrance of me*, his Meaning and Pleasure was, *That they should often do it, as often as they met together to perform their publick Devotions to him, if it was possible, or at least upon the Lord's Day.* And as this was the Sense wherein the *Apostles* understood our Saviour's Words, so they transmitted the same, together with the Faith, to those who succeeded them. For *Tertullian*, who lived in the next Century to the *Apostles*, saith, that the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*, *in omnibus mandatum a Domino, etiam antelucanis cætibus*, was commanded by our Lord, to be celebrated in *all christian Assemblies* even those which were held before Day, *Ter. de Cormil. cap. 3.* And before him *Pliny* the Second, who was contemporary with St. *John*, in the Account he gave of the Christians Manners to the Emperor *Trajan*, saith among other Things, To which their Practice was conformable. ' That they were wont upon a certain day, to meet together before it was light, and to bind themselves by a Sacrament, not to do any ill Thing. *Plin. Ep. l. 10. cap. 93.*' Which can be understood only of the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, as *administred* and *receiv'd* by them upon the *Lord's Day*. And *Justin Martyr* himself, who lived in the next Age after, in the *Apology* he wrote to *Antoninus Pius* in behalf of the Christians, giving a particular Account of what they did in their *publick* Congregations, saith, that upon that which is called the *Day of the Sun*, or *Sunday*, all *Christians* that live either in the *Cities* or in the *Country*, meet together: Where they hear the Writings of the

Prophets and *Apostles* read, and an *Exhortation* made to them: And then they having all joined together in their *Common Prayers*, *Bread* and *Wine* is brought and *consecrated*, or *blessed* by the President or Minister, and distributed to every one there present, and carried by *Deacons* to such as were absent. And the Distribution and Participation of the consecrated Elements is made to every one, *Just. Apol.* 2. And this Food, saith he, is called by us the *Eucharist*. From whence it appears, that in *those Days*, every one that was at *Prayers* and *Sermon*, received also the *Holy Sacrament*, at least upon the Lord's Day. None offered to go out 'till that was over: Or if they did so, they were cast out of the *Church*, as not worthy to be called *Christians*: As appears from the *Apostolical Canons* made or collected much about that Time, or soon after: One whereof runs thus. ' All Believers that come to Church, and hear the Scriptures, but don't stay to join in the *Prayers*, and ' the *Holy Communion* ought to be *excommunicated*, ' as bringing Confusion into the Church, *Can. Apost.* 9. It was then, it seems, reckoned a great *Disorder*, and *Confusion* for any to go out of the Church, as they now commonly do, till the whole *Service*, of which the *Communion* was the Principal Part, was all over. And if any did so, they were judged unfit to come to *Church*, or keep company with *Christians* any longer. This was the *Discipline* of the *Primitive* and *Apostolic Church*. This was the *Piety* of the *first Christians*: And it continued in a great Measure for some Ages, as might easily be shewn. But this may be sufficient at present to prove, that the *Apostles* and *Primitive Christians*

Christians, did not think that they observed our Lord's *Command* in the *Institution* of this *Hol Sacrament* aright, by receiving it only *now* and *then*. For as they would never have done it at all, but only in obedience unto that *Command*, so in Obedience unto that *Command*, they took all Opportunities, they could get, of doing it: At least they never omitted it on the *Lord's Day*. But upon *that day*, whatsoever they did besides, they always did this, in remembrance of what their great Lord and *Saviour* had done for them. And if we desire

to be such Christians as they were,

And is a Standing Rebuke to us at this Day who neglect an Ordinance of so great a consequence to Christians.

we must do as they did. We must, after their *pious Example*, observe our Lord's *Command*, by *eating this Bread*, and *drinking this cup as often as we can*; lest otherwise we lose the Benefit of that

Death he suffered for us, by our neglecting to do what he hath *commanded* in remembrance of it. And verily to *remember* Christ and his Death, is a thing of far greater Consequence than People are commonly aware of. The People of God under the *Law*, by his own Appointment had it *typified* and

2. As the Jews had the Death of Christ typified under the Law every day by divers Representations.

represented to them every day in the Year, by having *two Lambs* offer'd up for a burnt offering; the *one* in the *Morning*, and the other in the *Evening*, as a Type of that *Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World*, *Exod. xxix. 38. Num. xxviii. 3. John i. 29.* These were offered every Day besides the *Sin* offerings, *Peace* offerings, *Trespass* offerings, and such like as were offered upon particular Occasions. Wherefore,

fore, these two Lambs were called the *continual Burnt-offerings*, as being *continually offered* every Day in the Week. And upon the *Sabbath-day* there were two more added, *Num. xxviii. 9.* So that upon every *Sabbath-day* in the Year there were four Lambs *offered*, that they might be sure at least upon that Day, to think of that *grand Sacrifice* which was to be offered up for them. And it may not be amiss to observe that every one of those Lambs had a *Meat* and a *Drink* offering to attend it. A *Meat-offering* made of *Flower*, and a *Drink-offering* of *Wine*; which are both the *same Elements* which Christ himself *instituted* to signify his *Body* and *Blood*. And besides the *Burnt offerings*, the *Meat offerings*, and the *Drink offerings every Sabbath-day*, the *High Priest* was to set the *Shew-Bread* upon the *Holy Table*, and to put *Frankincense* thereon; which was to continue there before the Lord 'till the next *Sabbath*, when the Priest had eat Bread, and burnt the *Frankincense for a Memorial, even an Offering made by Fire unto the Lord*, *Leviticus ii. 4, 5, 9, &c. Exodus xxv. 30.* All which, as most Things in the *Levitical Law*, had doubtless some respect or other to *Christ*: As is intimated in the *Law* itself, where it is said, that this shall be done by an *everlasting Covenant*, *Lev. xxiv. 8* even that which is founded in *Christ*. The Bread consisting of *twelve Loaves* or *Cakes* (according to the Number of the Tribes of *Israel*, and of Christ's *Apostles*) was set upon the Table in *two Rows*; which might put us in mind of the two Natures in *Christ*, the *Bread of Life* which came down from *Heaven*, *John vi. 33, 35.* In *Hebrew* this

is called *the Bread of the Face*, because it was to be set before the Face of God continually, *Ex. xxy, 30.* as Christ continually appeareth in the Presence of God for us, *Heb, ix. 24.* Upon this Bread was laid pure *Frankincense*, called in *Hebrew, Olibanum*, from it's Whiteness, by reason whereof it was used in Sacrifice as a Symbol of God's pardoning Sin, as it was likewise of his Acceptance of what was done, by the sweet Scent it made when burnt. This was laid upon the Bread, to be to it for a *Memorial*, as the *Hebrew* Words signify, to call to remembrance the Offering made by Fire unto the Lord; that is, the Death of Christ typified by all such Offerings. The *Bread* was to be eaten, not burnt; but the pure *Frankincense* that was laid upon it, was to be burnt, and by its sweet smell call to mind the Death of Christ, by Virtue whereof God smells a sweet Savour, and accepts of the Sacrifices and Services we offer and perform to him, *1 Pet. ii. 5.* And all this was to be done, the *Bread* to be eaten, the *Frankincense* burnt, and new put into their Places, every Sabbath-day throughout the Year; that upon that Day, especially, Men might be put in Mind of their Saviour, and accordingly act their Faith on him for their Pardon, and Acceptance with God.

There were many such Ways, whereby the People of God in those Days were constantly put in mind of what the Saviour of the World was to do, and suffer for them. All which are now laid aside; and only this one Sacrament of his last Supper instituted by himself in the room of them. This is now our *Christian* Shew-bread, whereby we shew the Lord's Death 'till he come. This is our

Burnt,

Burnt-offering, our Sin-offering, our Trespas-offering, our Thank-offering, our Meat-offering, our Drink-offering, and all the Offerings required of us, whereby to commemorate our Blessed Saviour, and what he hath done for us. And therefore as the Jews were punctual and constant

in observing all Things prescribed to them, for the same End we certainly ought to do this, as often as we can; this one thing, which answers the End of all their Offerings, and yet hath neither the Trouble, nor the Charges, nor the Difficulty of any one of them.

So Christians should much more be punctual and constant in commemorating this one Sacrifice by this Sacrament.

Especially considering that God would never have appointed so many Ways, whereby to put them in mind of their Saviour, but that it was necessary for them to have him always in their minds. And it must needs be as necessary for us, as it was for them: Otherwise he who came into the World on purpose to save us, would never have commanded us to *eat this Bread, and drink this Cup in remembrance of him.* But he hath commanded us not only to do it, but to do it for this very End, that we may remember him: And therefore we may be confident, that to remember him, is very necessary to our being saved by him; and by consequence that all who desire to be so in good earnest must do this so often as to keep him always fresh in their Minds and Memories. And the reason is plain; for all the Promises of Salvation by Christ are made only to those who believe in him: But this Believing in him is not a transient Act, or a thing to be done only once or twice; but it is to be the continual Work and Employment of our Lives.

Lives. As we must constantly believe what he had taught, so we must constantly trust and depend upon him for all things necessary to our Salvation, according to the Promises that he hath made us. He that does not do this, cannot be truly said to believe in Christ at all; or at least, not to any Purpose. But it is impossible for us thus constantly to believe in Christ without keeping him always in our Minds. And it is as impossible for us to keep him thus always in our Minds, without frequent Receiving of this Holy Sacrament: If we could have done so without it, Christ would never have appointed this Sacrament to put us in mind of him; for he need not have done it.

The plain Case is this: There is no Way whereby 'tis possible for any of us to be saved, but by Jesus Christ: Nor by him, without believing in him. And therefore we had need use all the

Means we can for the exercising our Faith, in him, and keeping it always fix'd upon him. But we can by no

As the best means
of exercising our
Faith in Christ,

Means do it so effectually, as by the frequent receiving of that Holy Sacrament which he himself ordained for that very purpose, that we might remember him, so as to believe and trust in him for all Things relating to our Salvation. For he hath so ordered it, that this Sacrament doth not bring him into our Remembrance only in a slight and superficial manner, without making any Impression upon our Minds: But it exhibits and presents him to our very Eyes as dying for our Sins; or, to use the Apostle's Words, *herein Jesus Christ is evidently set forth before our Eyes, as crucified among us*, Gal. iii. 1. whereby our Minds are deeply

deeply affected, and our Faith confirmed in him. All the Promises which God hath made us in Christ, being hereby sealed as it were; and delivered to us in his Blood. As the Sacrament of *Circumcision* is said to be a *Token of the Covenant betwixt God and Man*, Gen. xvii. 11. and a *Seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, Rom. iv. 11. So the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper* both *signifies* and *seals to us* the Covenant of Grace founded in the Death of Christ, there represented before our Eyes; whereby our *Faith* is strengthened, and we are able to look upon ourselves as entitled to, and interested in, all the Blessings which are promised in the said Covenant, by the means of that Body and Blood which we there behold as broken and shed for us. For which Purpose also Christ himself in the Institution of it, calls the Signs by the Name of the Thing signified, saying, ' This is my Body which is broken for you, ' and this is my Blood of the new Testament which ' is shed for many for the Remission of Sins, ' 1 Cor. xi. 24. Matt. xxvi. 28." Whereby he fully assures us, that this is not *common* Bread and Wine, but his own Body and Blood, not in a *carnal*, but in a *spiritual*, or *sacramental* Sense: So that by eating this Bread, and drinking this Cup, we partake of his Body and Blood to all Intents and Purposes for which the one was broken, and the other shed; and that too as much, or rather more than we could have done it by eating his very Body and drinking his very Blood in a carnal and literal Sense. To the same purpose is that of the Apostle, ' The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the ' Communion of the Blood of Christ! and the ' Bread which we break, is it not the Communion

' of

* of the Body of Christ? 1 Cor. x: 16." Though it be not his very Body and Blood itself, it is the Communion of them: they are both communicated to us: So that if we receive them as we ought, by Faith, we attain the End wherefore his Body was broken, and his Blood shed, even the Remission of our Sins. Which is therefore particularly mentioned by himself in the Institution of the Cup.

And this is that which our Church teacheth in her Catechism, saying, *That the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper:* By the Faithful, by such as have, and act true *Faith*, which, as the Apostle saith, *is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* By such the Body and Blood of Christ is verily and indeed received; and only by such. Others see nothing there but Bread and Wine; but they who have such a Faith in Christ's Word, by it see his Body and Blood there; their *Faith* itself being the very Evidence thereof to them. The Elements are not *transubstantiated* into the Body and Blood of Christ as the *Papists* absurdly imagine: But the Substance of the Bread and Wine still continues the same: And therefore without *Faith*, no Man can receive any more than *plain*, tho' *consecrated*, Bread and Wine. But they who have, and at the same Time act that *Faith* which is the *Substance of things hoped for*, do by that *verily* and *indeed* receive the Body and Blood of Christ, according to his Word, when he said, *This is my Body, and this is my Blood.* This Christ said; and this they believe: And by their *believing* it, have it verified to them. It is to them that Body which was so
broken,

broken, and that Blood which was so shed for their Sins. They receive it as such upon Christ's Word; And accordingly partake of all the Merits of it; whereby their Sins are all as fully remitted to them, as if they themselves had already undergone all the Punishments which the Law had threatened against 'em. For Christ having undergone them all in their stead; and *He* having now communicated that Body and Blood in which he did it, unto them; and they having by *Faith* accordingly *received* it, the Law is now satisfied as to them, and can no more require that they should suffer the Punishments which were due unto their Sins, than it can require that Christ's Body and Blood, which they have *received*, should be *broken* and *shed* again for them.

And as Christ here puts us upon the Exercise of our *Faith*, by calling what we receive his *own* Body and Blood; so he doth likewise, by *offering* and *applying* it particularly unto us; saying in the very *Institution*, to the Apostles, and in them to every sound Member of his Church, 'This is my Body which is given for you, and 'this Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, 'which is shed for you,' *Luke* xxii. 19, 20. And therefore in the Distribution both of the Bread and Cup, according to the Order of the Church, the *Minister* saith to every particular *Communicant*, 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, 'preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting Life. 'Take, and eat this in remembrance that Christ 'died for thee.' And so in the Cup, 'Drink this 'in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for

‘ thee.’ Which is much to be observed, as being of mighty Use to the right exercising our *Faith* in Christ, and so to our obtaining *Pardon* and *Salvation* by him. For Christ is said to have died for Mankind in general; and all the *Promises* in him are made not to this or that particular Person, but to *all* that believe; and so every one is left to apply them as well as he can to himself. But now in this Holy Sacrament this is done to our *Hands*. For here Christ himself, by his Minister, assures every *particular Person* singly and by himself, that his Body was *given* for him, and his Blood was *shed* for him, or for her, which is an *extraordinary* Help to our *Faith*. For by this means every one, upon Receiving the Holy Sacrament, hath a fair Occasion, yea Reason, given him to think thus with himself.

‘ My Soul doth magnify the Lord, my Spirit
 ‘ rejoyceth in God my Saviour.’ Blessed be the
 ‘ eternal Son of God! He himself is become my
 ‘ Saviour. He *loved me*, and *gave himself for me*,
 ‘ even *for me also*, the unworthiest of all his
 ‘ Creatures. His *Body* was *broken*, his *Blood* was
 ‘ *shed for me*, and he hath now given it to me,
 ‘ that my Sins may be pardoned, and that my Soul
 ‘ may be saved by it. What then if my Sins be
 ‘ many? What if my Sins be great? I confess
 ‘ they are so; they are very many, and they are
 ‘ very great; but I am truly *humbled* for them;
 ‘ I heartily repent of *them*; I stedfastly resolve by
 ‘ God’s Assistance never to return any more unto
 ‘ them, but spend the rest of my Life wholly in
 ‘ his Service and to his Honour. What then need
 ‘ I *fear*? Shall I *fear* the curse of the *Law*?
 My

‘ My Saviour hath *redeemed me* from it, being
 ‘ *made a Curse for me*. Shall I *fear Shame*, or
 ‘ *Pain*, or *Death* itself? My Saviour hath suf-
 ‘ fered them all for me, so that none of them
 ‘ now can come near to hurt me. Shall I *fear*
 ‘ that Sin will still have Dominion over me? My
 ‘ Saviour hath overcome it, and his Grace shall
 ‘ be sufficient for me. Shall I *fear* the *Powers of*
 ‘ *Hell*? My Saviour hath triumphed over all,
 ‘ and will enable me to do so too. Shall I *fear* the
 ‘ *Wrath* of God? My Saviour hath appeased it
 ‘ with his own *Blood*, and so hath restored me to
 ‘ his Love and Favour; for *he died for me*. He
 ‘ himself hath now told me so; and therefore I
 ‘ believe it, and am now persuaded, that neither
 ‘ Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities,
 ‘ nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to
 ‘ come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other
 ‘ Creature, shall be able to separate me from the
 ‘ Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my
 ‘ Lord,’ *Rom. viii. 38, 39.*

Now seeing the *receiving* of the *Sacrament* of
 his last Supper conduceth so very much both to
 the exercising and strengthening our
Faith in our *blessed Saviour*, we
 who can never be saved without be-
 lieving in him, can’t surely but ac-
 knowledge that it is as much our *Interest*, as it
 is our *Duty* to *receive* it as *often* as we can. For
 my own Part, I do not see how it is possible for
 us to live either so comfortably, or so piously, as
 becometh those who expect Salvation by Christ,
 without it. For first, we cannot but be all con-
 scious to ourselves of the many Sins and Failures

Hence receiving
 the Sacrament is
 both our Interest
 and our Duty.

that we are continually subject to through the whole Course of our Lives. There is not a Day passeth over our Heads without doing something *we ought not to do*, or else *not doing* something which *we ought*. Our *Thoughts*, our *Affections*, our *Words*, our *Actions*, are all one way or other faulty. The very best Works we do, have something that is not good in them, so that every Day we contract new Guilt, and have more Sins to answer for than we had the Day before. But every Sin that we commit exposeth us to the Wrath of Almighty God; and makes us obnoxious to all the *Curses* which he hath threatened in his Word. The Thoughts whereof cannot but often cut us to the Heart, and make us cry out with *David*, ' Mine Iniquities are gone over my Head ' as an heavy Burden, they are too heavy for ' me to bear,' *Psal.* xxxviii. 4. But what then shall we do? Whither shall we go for Ease? Where can we find any Rest or Quiet for our troubled Minds? No where certainly so well as at our *Lord's Table*. It is only he that can give *Rest unto our Souls*, and it is there *he* doth it most effectually. For he there acquaints us that he himself hath *born the Punishment of our Sins*, and shews us how he did it, even by giving his Body to be *broken*, and his *Blood* to be *shed* for them. We there see that the Son of God died for the Sins of the World, and for ours among the rest. Yea, he there tells us he did so, by saying, ' Take, eat, ' this is my Body which is given for you; and this ' is my Blood which is shed for you,' for you and for your Sins, as well as for any other. As if he should say to any particular Person by himself, Be-
hold

told, and see what I have done, and what I have suffered for thee. It was for thee that I assumed a human *Body* and *Blood*. And this *Body* I gave to be *broken*, this *Blood* I gave to be *shed* for thee; and I now give it to thee for the Expiation of thy Sins. Therefore be of good cheer, my Son, thy Sins are pardoned, *only be not faithless, but believing.*

He that thinks not this to be a great *Comfort*, must needs be very much hardned in his Sins, so is not to feel the Burden of them. For he that loth that, as all true Penitents certainly do, cannot but be highly pleased with any Assurance that can be

'Tis our Interest as it comforts us with hopes of Pardon.

given him, that his Sins are pardoned: Much more with the greatest he can ever have on this side Heaven, even that which is given in the Holy Sacrament, where his Pardon is sealed with the Blood of Christ, and delivered to him by his Officers. And therefore such an one cannot but be always longing for an Opportunity of *receiving* it, and embrace it with all his Heart whensoever it comes; although it be *every day* in the Week, as the *primitive Christians* had it; for this very Reason, even because of their daily Sins, as St. *Cyprian* informs us, *de Orat. Dom.* But in our Age the Case is alter'd: *Once a Week* is now thought too much. And I do not deny but that they who can live a *whole Week* together without Sin, may not have so much need of receiving it so often. But where shall we find such a Man? Not among us, be sure; we all know that we Sin in Thought, Word, or Deed, *every Day* in the *Week*, if not *every Hour* in the *Day*. And therefore if we have
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any Care of our Souls, if any true Sorrow for our Sins, if any Desire to obtain the Pardon of them from the Hands of God, we must catch at all Opportunities we can get of *receiving* that *Blessed Sacrament*, where it is offered to us by Christ himself, and that too upon the most reasonable Terms that can be imagined ; nothing but *Repentance* and *Faith* in him.

Neither is this all : For we are sensible not only of our manifold Sins, but likewise of the Cause or Occasion of them, even the Corruption of our Nature ; which is so very much disorder'd and out of tune, that *we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves*, much less to do any thing that is truly good, but when we would do good, *evil is present with us*, and spoils all we do : So that we may every one say with St. Paul, *I know that in me, (that is in my Flesh,) dwelleth no good Thing. For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not*, Rom. vii. 18. But how to perform that which is evil, we all find : We all find that very easy and natural to us. Our Thoughts are always running after it, our Hearts inclined to it ; and do what we can by our own Strength, some Sin or other is apt to get *dominion over us*, and to *reign in our mortal Bodies*. Yea, tho' *we delight* (as the same Apostle speaks) *in the Law of God after the inward Man*, yet we see *another Law in our Members, warring against the Law of our Minds, and bringing us into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in our Members*, ver. 22. 23. And if we be really concerned, as we ought to be, for the Glory of God, and for our own Good, this must needs be the greatest Trouble

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we can have in this World, and makes us cry out, every one in the Bitterness of his Soul, as he did, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death*, ver. 24. But then we may say also as he doth in the next Words, *I thank God thro' Jesus Christ our Lord*, ver. 25, He can deliver us, and will too, if we do but apply ourselves aright unto him for it. But for that purpose there is nothing like to the frequent *receiving* his blessed *Body* and *Blood*. Our very Preparation for that *Holy Sacrament*, by recollecting our Sins, by considering what we have deserved, and what our Saviour suffered for them, and by examining our Repentance of them, whether it be sincere or no, doth of itself contribute very much to the taking off our Affections from them, and to the putting us upon constant Endeavour to forsake and avoid them. And so do the Impressions also which the solemn *Administration* of so Divine an Ordinance makes, and leaves upon our Minds afterwards, by setting before us the *Death* which the Son of God suffered for our Sins, and assuring us of Pardon if we repent of them. By which Means they who frequently *receive* this Holy Sacrament, as suppose every *Lord's Day*, are always kept upon their Guard, between the Preparations they make for it, and the Impressions that are made upon them by it. Which, if duly observed, must needs meet together, and so give them no Time to indulge themselves in any Vice or Wickedness. For being to *receive* it upon the *Lord's Day*, they cannot surely but think of it and prepare themselves for it two or three Days before; and when they have been there, they cannot but remember what they saw, and heard, and did there

there, at least three or four Days after, and so to the Time when they are to prepare themselves again for it. Whereby their Minds are piously disposed and employ'd all the *Week*, either about what they did the *Sunday* before, or what they are to do the *Sunday* following. Which must needs conduce very much to the arming them against all Temptations, to the preventing their falling into any gross Sin, and to the keeping them continually in an *holy* and *devout* Temper.

But that which doth it most effectually of all, is the Spiritual Strength they receive at the Sacrament itself. Where, as our Church rightly observes and asserts in her Catechism, *Our Souls are strengthened and refreshed by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine.* Meat and Drink, we know, are by God's own Appointment, the common Supports of human Life. Of all Meats, Bread is reckon'd the most *strengthening*; of all Drinks, Wine is the most *refreshing*. Now as our Bodies are *strengthened* and *refreshed* by these which are there used as the outward Part, or Sign of the Lord's Supper: So are our Souls by the Thing signified by them, even by the Body and Blood of Christ, which as I have *shewn* are there *verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful*. It is a great Refreshment to our Souls, as we have seen already, to have the Pardon of our Sins sealed and delivered to us, as it is there in the *Blood* of Christ. And our Souls are as much strengthened by the Grace of God, which always follows upon his Pardon and Reconciliation to us; and accompanieth the Body and Blood of Christ, wheresoever it is

is. And therefore all who duly receive it, do thereby receive it from him, *and Grace for Grace*, John i. 16. and so go from Strength to Strength 'till they come to a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, Eph, iv. 13.

Let us hear what he himself saith : ' I am the Bread of Life, saith he, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst, *John vi. 35.* I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven. If any Man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever : And the Bread that I will give, is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World, ver 51. Whofo eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood hath eternal Life. For my Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed : He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father ; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me, ver. 54, 55, 56, 57. But then he adds afterwards, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing. The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life, ver. 63.' As if he had said, All that I have now spoken is to be understood in a spiritual Sense, and of a spiritual Life. I am the Life of your Souls : It is by my Body, and my Blood, that your Souls are quickned, nourished, Strengthened and preserved to eternal Life.

For this we have Christ's own Word, and therefore may be confident, that as it is by him only that we can be regenerate, and born again to a *new* and *spiritual* Life : So it is by him only that this *new* and *spiritual* Life can be maintained and excited in

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our Actions. *Without him we can do nothing*, as he himself said, *John xv. 5.* ' But we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us, as his Apostle found by Experience, *Phil. iv. 13.* But he strengthens none but those who believe in him, and therefore only because they do so. For it is by our *believing* in him that we are made Members of his Body, and so receive Strength and Nourishment from him our Head, and according as our *Faith* is stronger or weaker; so is the Strength we receive from him more or less: And therefore the Holy Sacrament being the most sovereign Means for the confirming our Faith in him, our Souls must needs be very much strengthened and refreshed by it. For we there receive the proper Food of our Souls the Bread of Life, and the Water of Life, the blessed Body and Blood of Christ himself. And if his Blood, then his Spirit too, which is always with them; that Holy Spirit which purifies our Hearts, which sanctifies our Nature, which worketh in us both to will and to do, which strengthens and enables us to overcome the World, to withstand Temptations, to mortify our Sins, to do our whole Duty both to God and Man, and so ' offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God ' through Jesus Christ our Lord, *1 Pet. ii. 5.*

From hence therefore we may see the great *Advantages*, if not the Necessity of frequent Communion. We all know that our Bodies cannot subsist long, but very few Days, without Food, and why should we think that our Souls should do so better than our Bodies? We all find by daily Experience, that our Souls are

Is of great Advantage and necessary for us on many other Accounts.

are altogether as frail and infirm as our Bodies are; subject to as many Distempers, and every way as apt to decay, to grow faint and feeble, unable to walk at all in the narrow Path that leads to Life, without stumbling, or at least reeling to one side or other, unless they be always kept in good Plight, nourished and strengthened with such Food as is proper for them. And certainly we have as much reason at least, to take Care of our immortal *Souls*, to preserve their Life, and Health, and Vigour, as we have to look after those Lumps of Clay, which e'er long must crumble into Dust. But as for our *Bodies*, we feed them every Day, and that too, with the best that we can get for them. And shall we think *once a Week* too often to feed our *Souls*? And where shall we get such proper Food for them, as that which God himself hath provided, even the blessed *Body* and *Blood* of his dear Son? Which is so *nourishing*, so *strengthening*, so *refreshing* to our *Souls*, that the *primitive Christians*, by the frequent use of it, were able and ready every Moment not only to do, but to suffer cheerfully whatsoever could be laid upon them, even Death itself for the sake of *Christ*. But the *Sacrament* is the same still as it was then. And if we could use it as constantly as they did, we might live as they lived, and die too, if God should be pleased to honour us so far as to call us to it, for his Sake who died for us, and whose Death we there commemorate.

Wherefore as ever we desire to be strong in *Faith*, and zealous for the Honour of God: As we desire to *quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked*: As we desire to *crucify the Flesh with the Affections and*

Lusts: As we desire to live above this World, so as not to be ensnared or overpowered by any thing that is in it: As we desire that the Power of Christ should always rest upon us, and enable us to walk in all the *Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless*: In short, as we desire to live by his Assistance, both to live the Life, and to *die the Death of the Righteous*, we must *often eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*; and bless God for all Opportunities that we can get to do it.

These are some of the many *Arguments* and *Rea-*

*The little Effect
good Arguments
have on most as to
particular.* *sons* that might be produced for *fre-*
quent Communion. What Effect they
will have upon those that hear them

I know not; but fear that it will be much the same that Reason and Argument usually have upon the greatest Part of Mankind: That is, very little or none at all. But for mine own Part, when I seriously consider these Things, I cannot but wonder with myself how it comes to pass; that this *Holy Sacrament*, instituted by Christ himself, is so much neglected and disused as it is, in a Place where his Religion is professed and acknowledged to be, as really it is, the *only true Religion* in the World. And after all my Search, I can resolve it into nothing else but the Degeneracy of the Age we live in, and the great Decay of that most *Holy Religion* among us. I am sure *from the beginning it was not so*. For some Ages after the Establishment of the *christian Religion* by Christ our Saviour, so long as they who embraced it gave themselves up to the Conduct of that *Holy Spirit* which he sent down among them, and were inspired

*The Influence of the
Holy Sacrament in
better times.*

inspired by it with true Zeal for God, and inflamed with Love to their ever blessed Redeemer, so as to observe all Things that he had commanded, whatsoever it cost them; then they never met together upon any Day in the Week, much less upon the *Lord's day*, for the publick Worship of God, but they all received this *Holy Sacrament*, as the principal Business they met about, and the most proper Christian Service they could perform. And it is very observable, that so long as this continued, Men were endued with extraordinary Gifts, as well as the Graces of God's Holy Spirit, so as to be able to do many wonderful things by it: Yea, and suffer too whatsoever could be inflicted on them for Christ's sake. But in Process of time Men began to leave off their first Love to him, and turn his Religion into *Dispute* and *Controversy*; and then as their Piety and Devotion grew cooler, and cooler, the *Holy Sacrament* began to be neglected more and more; and the *Priests* who administer'd it, had fewer and fewer, to receive it, until at length they had sometimes none at all. But still they mistook themselves to be obliged in *Duty* and *Conscience* to consecrate and receive it themselves, although they had none to receive with them. And this Mistake, I suppose, gave the first Occasion to that Multitude of *private Masses* which have been so much abused in the Church of *Rome*; where the Priest commonly receives himself, although he hath never a one to communicate with him: And so there can be no *Communion* at all. And as that *Abuse*, so the *Disuse* of the *Holy Sacrament*, sprang first from Mens *Coldness* and *Indifferency* in Religion,

Tis Disputes
enervate Piety.

on, which hath prevailed so far in our Days, that there are many thousands of Persons who are *baptized*, and live many Years in the Pro-

And Indifferency
in Religion suc-
ceeded.

fession of the Christian Religion, and yet never received the *Sacrament* of Christ's Body and Blood in all their

Lives. And but very few that receive it above once or twice a Year, which is a great Reproach and Shame to the Age we live in; but none at all to the *Church*: For she is always ready to administer it, if *People* could be persuaded to come to it. But that they cannot, or rather will not be; they have still one *Pretence* or other to excuse themselves, but none that will excuse them before God and their own Conscience another Day.

What their *Pretences* are, I shall not undertake to determine. They are so many that they

And many Pre-
tences at length
alleged against
receiving though
vain and trifling
ones.

cannot easily be numbered. And many of them so *vain* and *trifling*, that they are not worth rehearsing. But the bottom of them all is this; Men

renounced the World, the Devil and the Flesh in their Baptism, but they are loth to do it in their Lives: They then promised to serve God, but now they find something else to do. They have all one *Sin* or other that reigns over them, and captivates their Hearts and Affections, so that they cannot endure the Thoughts of parting with it. And they think, as they ought to do, that if they come to the Holy Sacrament, they must *first examine themselves*, repent of all their Sins, turn to God, renew their baptismal Vow, and resolve to lead a new Life. But this they are resolved not to do, And if they should come to the Sa-
crament

crament, it would but disturb their Nothing really ob-
 Quiet, make them uneasy in their structs, but love to
 Minds and hinder them from enjoy- Sin.

ing the Pleasure they were wont to take in their Sins.
 And for their Part, they had rather displease God
 than themselves: And neglect their Duty rather
 than leave their Sins. And so add Sin to Sin, and
 'treasure up to themselves Wrath against the
 'Day of Wrath, and the Revelation of the
 righteous Judgment of God.' This is plainly
 the Case of most of those who live in the Neg-
 lect of this Holy Commandment. And what
 can be said to such Men? So long as such, they are
 not fit to come to the *Communion*. And therefore
 all that can be said to them, is only to beg of
 them to consider their Condition before it be too
 late, and repent as soon as they can: Lest they die,
 as they have lived, in Sin, and be punished with
 'everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the
 'Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.'

But there are others who do receive the *Sacra-*
ment of Christ's Body and Blood sometimes, as
 perhaps, *two* or *three* times in a Year: And my
 Charity prompts me to believe, that they would
 do it *oftner*, if they thought it to be their *Duty*.

But there are some things which at first

Sight may seem, at least to them, to 'Tis our Duty to
 plead their Excuse; and therefore receive oft'ner than
 deserve to be duly considered by us. three times a Year

As *First*, They say, our *Church* requires them
 only to receive *three* Times a Year: And they do
 not question but she would oblige them to receive
 it *oft'ner*, if it was necessary. This is a mistake
 that a great many have fallen into, and by that
 means

means have been kept from the Sacrament more than otherwise they would have been. I call it a mistake: For it is so, and a very great one. For as in all things else, so particularly in this, our *Church* keeps close to the Pattern of the *Apostolick* and *Primitive Church*: When, as I have before observed, the *Lord's Supper* was administered and received commonly every *Day* in the *Week*, but most constantly on the *Lords Day*. And our *Church* supposeth it to be so still, and therefore hath accordingly made Provision for it. Which, that I may demonstrate to you, it will be necessary to enquire into the Sense and Practice of our *Church* in this Point all along from the Beginning of the *Reformation*; or to speak more properly, from the Time when she was restored to that *Apostolical Form* which she is now of, as she was at first: Which we date from the Reign of King *Edward VI*.

The sense of
our Church a-
bout frequent
Communion
heretofore.

For in the first year of that pious Prince, the *Liturgy*, or *Book of Common Prayer*, was first compiled; and in the second it was settled by *Act of Parliament*. In which Book it is ordered, that the *Exhortation* to those who are minded to receive the Sacrament, shall be read: Which is there set down, much the same that we read now. But afterwards it is said, In *Cathedral Churches*, or other Places where there is daily *Communion*, it shall be sufficient to read this *Exhortation* above written once in a Month. And in *Parish Churches*, it may be left unsaid, Fol. 123. Where we may observe, *First*, that in those Days there was daily *Communion* in the *Cathedral Churches*, and other Places,

It should be dai-
ly administered
in Cathedrals.

Places, as there used to be in the *Primitive Church*. And accordingly I find, in Records of *St. Paul's* that when the Plate Jewels, &c. belonging to the said *Cathedral* werer delivered to the King's Commis-
sioners, they, upon the *Dean and Chapter's* Request, permitted to remain among other things, 'Two Pair
' of Basons for to bring the Communion Bread, and
'to receive the Offerings for the Poor; Whereof
'one Pair Silver for every Day, the other for Festi-
'vals, &c. gilt.' Dugdale's Hist. of *St. Paul's*, Page
274. From whence it is plain, that the *Communion* was then celebrated in that *Church* every Day.
And so it was even in *Parish Church-* And the Parish-
es. For otherwise it needed not to Churches.

be ordered, as it is in the *Rubrick* above-mention-
ed, that in *Parish Churches* upon the Week Days
the said *Exhortation* may be left unsaid. And to
the same Purpose it is afterwards said, 'When
'the Holy Communion is celebrated on the
'Work-day, or in private Houses, then may be
'omitted the *Gloria in Excelc'is*, the Creed, the
'Homily, and the Exhortation,' *Fol. 132.*

Next after that we quoted first, this *Rubrick*
immediately follows; 'And if upon the Sunday
'or Holy-day, the People be negligent to come
'to the Communion, then shall the Priest earnest-
'ly exhort his Parishioners to dispose themselves
'to the receiving of the Holy Communion more
'diligently,' saying, &c. which shews that upon
all *Sundays* and *Holy-days*, People At least on Sundays
then generally *received*: The *Church* and Holy Days.
expected and required it of them. And if any
Minister found that his *Parishioners* did not al-
ways come, at least upon those Days, he was to

R

exhort

exhort and admonish them to dispose themselves more diligently for it: And that by the Command of the *Church itself*; whereby she hath sufficiently declared her Will and Desire, that all her Members should receive the Communion as they did in the *Primitive Times*, every Day in the Week if possible: And if that could not be, yet at least every Sunday and Holy-Day in the Year.

In the *Rubrick* after the *Communion Service*, there are several Things to the same Purpose: For it is there ordered, that upon *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, *although there be none to communicate*, the Priest shall say all things at the Altar appointed to be said at the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*, until after the Offertory. And then it follows: 'And the same order shall be used 'whensoever the People be customably assembled 'to pray in the Church, and none disposed to 'communicate with the Priest,' *Fol.* 130. Whereby we are given to understand, that upon what Day soever People came to Church, the *Priest* was to be ready to celebrate the *Holy Sacrament* if any were disposed to *communicate* with him. And if there were none, he was to shew his Readiness, by reading a considerable Part of the *Communion Service*.

There is another *Rubrick* in the same Place, that makes it still plainer. Which I shall transcribe, because the Book is not commonly to be had; neither can it be expressed better than in its Words, which are these, 'Also that the *receiving* 'of the Sacrament of the blessed Body and Blood 'of Christ, may be most agreeable to the *Institution* thereof, and to the Usage of the *Primitive*

' *tive*

‘*tive Church*, in all Cathedral and Collegiate
 ‘ Churches, there shall always *some* communicate
 ‘ with the *Priest* that ministreth. And that the
 ‘ same may be also observed every where abroad
 ‘ in the Country, some *one* at the least of that
 ‘ House in every *Parish*, to whom by Course,
 ‘ after the Ordinance herein made, it appertaineth
 ‘ to offer for the Charges of the Communion; or
 ‘ some other whom they shall provide to offer for
 ‘ them, shall receive the *Holy Communion* with
 ‘ the Priest: The which may be the better done,
 ‘ for that they know before when their *Course*
 ‘ cometh, and may therefore dispose themselves
 ‘ to the *worthy receiving* of the *Sacrament*. And
 ‘ with him or them, who doth so offer the *Char-*
 ‘ *ges* of the *Communion*, all others who be then
 ‘ godly disposed thereunto, shall likewise receive
 ‘ the *Communion*. And by this Means the *Mini-*
 ‘ *ster* having always some to communicate with
 ‘ him, may accordingly solemnize so *high* and
 ‘ *holy Mysteries*, with all the Suffrages and due
 ‘ Order appointed for the same. And the *Priest*
 ‘ on the *Week Day* shall forbear to celebrate the
 ‘ *Communion*, except he have some that will *com-*
 ‘ *municate* with him.’

Here we see what Care the Church took that
 the *Sacrament* might be duly administred not only
 in *Cathedral*, but likewise in *Parish Churches*.
 For which Purpose, whereas every *Parishioner*
 had before been used to find the *Holy Loaf*, as it
 was called, in his *course*; in the *Rubrick* before
 this, it is ordained that the *Pastor* or *Curate* shall
 find *sufficient Bread* and *Wine* for the *Communion*;
 and that the *Parishioners* every one in his *course*,

shall offer the Charges of it at the *Offertory* to the *Pastor* or Curate; and in this it is ordain'd that every such *Parishioner* shall then in his *course communicate*, or else get some other Person to do it, that so the Communion may be duly celebrated: And all there present that were godly disposed might partake of it. Which one would have thought as good a Provision as could have been made in the case. But notwithstanding, thro' the Obstinacy and Carelessness of some, in not making their said *Offering* as they were commanded, it sometimes failed; as appears from the Letter written about a Year after by the *Privy Council*, and subscribed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and others, to the *Bishops*, to assure them that the King intended to go on with the *Reformation*, wherein among other Things they say:

‘ And farther, whereas it is come to our Knowledge, that divers *froward* and *obstinate* Persons do refuse to pay towards the finding of *Bread* and *Wine* for the *Holy Communion*, according to the Order prescribed in the said Book, by reason whereof the *Holy Communion* is many times omitted upon the *Sunday*: These are to will and command you to convene such obstinate Persons before you, and them to admonish, and command to keep the Order prescribed in the said Book. And if any such shall refuse so to do, to punish them by *Suspension*, *Excommunication*, or other Censures of the Church,’ Hist. Reform. Part 2. p. 192. From whence we may also learn how much they were troubled to hear that the Holy Sacrament was any where omitted even upon the *Sunday*, upon any *Sunday*; how great

great a *Fault* and *Scandal* they judged it to be, and what Care they took to prevent it for the future!

This was the State of this Affair at the Beginning of the *Reformation*, and it continues in Effect the same to this Day. About three or four Years after the afore-
The same Obligation now to daily Communion, as at the beginning of the Reformation.
 said Book of Common *Prayer* first came out, it was revised, and set forth again with some Alterations in the *Form*, but none that were material in the *Substance* of it. Only the former Way of the *Parishioners* finding *Bread* and *Wine* for the Communion of every one in his *course*, being now found not so effectual as was expected; that was now laid aside, and it was ordered to be provided at the Charges of the Parish in general, in these Words, ‘ The Bread and ‘ Wine for the Communion shall be provided by ‘ the Curate and the Church-Wardens, at the ‘ Charges of the Parish : And the Parish shall be ‘ discharg’d of such Sums of Money or other Duties, which hitherto they have paid for the same, ‘ by Order of their Houses, every Sunday. Where we may take Notice, that as hitherto it has been provided every *Sunday* by the Houses of every Parish, as they lay in Order, it was now to be provided by the *Ministers* and Church-Warden at the Charges of the *whole Parish*, but still every *Sunday* as it was before; which being the most certain Way that could be found out for it, it is still continued; the first Part of this *Rubrick*, whereby it is enjoined, being still in Force. But the latter Part from these Words, *And the Parish shall be discharged*, &c. is now left out as it was necessary

cessary it should be, after the former *course*, had been disused for above an hundred Years.

Now this Book of *Common Prayer*, which was thus settled by Act of Parliament, in the *fifth* and *sixth* Years of *Edward* the VIth, was that which was afterwards confirmed in the Beginning of Q. *Elizabeth's* Reign, with one Alteration or Addition of certain Lessons, to be used on every *Sunday* in the Year, and the *Form* of the *Litany* alter'd and corrected, with two Sentences only added in the Delivery of the *Sacrament* to the Communicants. These were all the Alterations that were then made, or that indeed have been ever made, since that Time to this, except it be in Words or Phrases, in the Addition of some Prayers, and in some such inconsiderable Things, as do not at all concern our present Purpose. For the Care of our Church, to have the *Holy* Communion constantly celebrated, hath been the same all along, from the Time that the Book of *Common Prayer* before spoken of, was first settled. As may easily be proved from that which was established by the last Act of Uniformity; which therefore I shall now briefly consider, so far as it relates to the Business in Hand: That we may understand the Sense of our Church at present concerning it.

For this Purpose, therefore, we may first observe that the Communion Service is appointed for the Communion itself, and therefore called the *Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion*. Now our Church supposing, or at least hoping that some of her Members will receive this *Holy* Communion every Day, hath taken

ken care that this Service may be used every Day in the Week, as appears from the *Rubrick* immediately before the proper Lessons, which is this: 'Note also, that the Collect, Epistle and Gospel, appointed for the *Sunday*, shall serve all the Week after, where it is not in this Book otherwise order'd.' But the *Collect*, *Epistle*, and *Gospel*, are Part of the *Communion Service*, for which there is no Occasion on the Week-Days, neither can it be used except the *Communion* be administered, which therefore is here supposed to be done every Day in the Week. And so it is also in the Celebration of the *Communion* itself, where there are proper Prefaces appointed to be used upon certain Days. Upon *Christmas Day*, and seven Days after. Upon *Easter Day*, and seven Days after. Upon *Ascension-Day*, and Seven Days after. Upon *Whitsunday*, and six Days after (the next Day being *Trinity Sunday* which hath one peculiar to itself.) Now to what Purpose are these *Prefaces* appointed to be used seven Days together, or six, none of which can be a *Sunday*, if the *Sacrament* ought not to be administered upon all those Days, and so upon *Week-days*, as well as *Sundays*? They are all, as I intimated before, to be used in the actual *Administration* of it, and therefore plainly suppose it to be actually *adminired* upon each of those Days, which being for the most Part neither *Sundays* nor *Holy-Days*, they most evidently demonstrate, that according to the *Mind* and *Order* of our *Church*, as well as the *Primitive*, the *Lord's Supper* ought to be administered every Day, that all who live as they ought, in her Communion, may be daily Partakers of it.

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In the *Rules and Orders*, (which we call the *Rubricks*) after the *Communion Service*, there are several Things that deserve to be considered in this Case. It is there order'd, that there shall be no Celebration of the *Communion*, except there be a convenient Number; that is, *four*, or *three* at the least, to communicate with the *Priest*. According to which *Rule*, although the *Priest* have all things ready, and desires to consecrate and receive the *Holy Sacrament* himself, yet he must not do it, unless he have such a Number to communicate with him, that it may be properly a *Communion*. But, as it is there order'd, ' Upon the ' *Sundays* and other *Holy-Days* (if there be no ' *Communion*) shall be said, all that is appointed ' at the *Communion* until the End of the general ' *Prayer* (for the good Estate of the Catholick ' *Church of Christ*,)' where we may observe, that the *Church*, as I have shewn, appoints the *Sacrament* to be administred *every Day*. But if it so fall out, that there be not in any Place a convenient Number to communicate with the *Priest*, and by consequence according to the Order before-mentioned, *no Communion*; yet nevertheless upon *Sundays* and other *Holy-Days*, so much of the *Communion Service* shall be said as is there limited. Why only upon *Sundays* and *Holy-Days*, but to distinguish them from other Days, on which, if there be a sufficient Number of *Communicants*, the whole *Communion Service* is to be used; but no Part of it, except there be so; but upon *Sundays* and *Holy-Days*, altho' there be not such a Number, and therefore no *Communion*; yet however, the *Priest* shall go up to the *Altar*, and there read
all

all that is appointed to be said at the *Communion*, until the End of the Prayer for Christ's *Catholick Church*; whereby the People may say, that neither *he* nor the *Church* is to be blamed, if the *Holy Sacrament* be not then administered. Forasmuch as he is there ready by the Order of the *Church* to do it, and goes as far as he can in the Service appointed for it, without the actual Administration of it: And therefore that the Fault is wholly in themselves that it is not *actually* administered, because they will not make up a convenient Number among them to communicate with him. Which is a most excellent Order; for the People hereby have not only God's *Holy Commandments* solemnly proclaimed, *Epistle* and *Gospel* for the Day, the *Nicene Creed* and *Prayers* proper for that Occasion read to them; but they are likewise put in Mind of their Duty to their Saviour in receiving his most blessed *Body* and *Blood*, and upbraided with their Neglect of it. For which Purposes also I think it very expedient, that the Order of the *Church*, or the reading that Part of the Service at the *Communion Table*, even when there is no *Communion*, be duly observed.

Reading the Ante-Communion Service upbraids the People with their Neglect of the Sacrament.

The next *Rubrick*, in the same Place, that concerns our present Business is this, ' And in all Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Colleges, where there are many Priests and Deacons, they shall all receive the Communion with the Priest every Sunday at the least, except they have a reasonable Cause to the contrary.' Where we see that the *Church* doth not command, but supposes that the *Sacrament* is constantly administered in all

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such

such Places ; taking it for granted, that it is never omitted there, where there are so many Persons devoted to the Service of God ; but that there is always a sufficient Number to *communicate*. But the absolutely commands, that all *Priests* and *Deacons* that belong to such Foundations, shall receive the *Communion* with the *Priest* every *Sunday* at the least, except any of them have a reasonable Cause to the contrary (which the Ordinary of the Place, I suppose, is to be Judge of :) They are bound therefore, all and every one of them, to receive it every *Sunday*, which notwithstanding they cannot do, unless it be administered every *Sunday* among them. Wherefore if there be any such Places where it is not so administered, or any such Persons who do not, without just Cause to the contrary, receive it every *Sunday* in the Year, I do not see how they can answer it to God, to the *Church*, or to their own *Consciences*. Neither are they bound to receive it only every *Sunday* but every *Sunday at the least*. Which plainly supposeth that it is administered upon *other Days* as well as *Sundays*. For otherwise they could not receive it oft'ner, if they would. And it is to be hoped, that all such Persons receive it as often as it is administered among them. But the *Church* expressly requires them to receive it at least every *Sunday*, so as never to omit it at least upon that Day, except they have a reasonable, or such a Cause to the contrary as will justify their Omission of it before the *Church*, and Christ himself at the last Day. These things being thus briefly explain'd, we shall easily see into the meaning of the Words that gave us the Occasion to discourse on them, which are these, in the Place
last

last quoted: 'And note, that every Parishioner shall communicate at the least three Times in the Year, of which *Easter* to be one.'

From whence some have been tempted to think, that the *Church* doth not look upon it as necessary that they should communicate above *thrice*

Every Parishioner bound to receive three times in the Year at least under Pain of Excommunication.

a Year. I say, tempted to think so. For no Man surely in his right Wits can of himself draw such an Inference from these Words, which is so directly contrary to the Sense of the *Church*, and hath no Foundation at all in the Words themselves. For the *Church*, as I have shewn, has taken all the Care she can, that the *Holy Sacrament* should be every where administred, if it was possible, every Day, at least every *Sunday* and *Holy Day* in the Year; which she would never have done, if she had thought it sufficient for any one to receive only *twice* a Year. For then all her Care about the frequent Administration of it, would be in vain and to no Purpose. And besides, she hath drawn up an excellent Exhortation to be read by the *Minister* of every Parish, in case he sees the People negligent to come to the Holy Communion, beginning thus: 'Dearly Beloved, on — I intend by GOD's Grace to celebrate the Lord's Supper.' Where we may observe, that it is not said, on such a *Sunday*, but on — with a Blank, to shew that the *Minister* may appoint the Communion on any Day of the Week, when he can have a sufficient Number to communicate with him; and so it is in the other Exhortation: Only there is *Day* put in, which may be understood of *Tuesday* or *Wednesday*, or any other Days as well as *Sunday*, for

the

the same Reason. In that first mentioned, the *Minister* in the Words, and by the Order of the Church, invites all there present, and beseecheth them for the Lord *Jesus* Christ's sake, to come to the *Lord's Supper*. And among other Things, he saith to them all, ' I bid you in the Name of God, ' I call you in Christ's behalf, I exhort you as you ' love your own Salvation, that you will be partakers of this Holy Communion.' There are several such pathetical Expressions in that *Exhortation*, wherewith the Church most earnestly exhorts, adviseth, admonisheth all Persons to come to this *Holy Sacrament*. And this Exhortation every *Minister* is to read publickly before all his Congregation, whensoever he sees them negligent to come to it: As all are who come but *two* or *three* times a Year, where they may have it oft'ner if they will. They plainly live in the *neglect* of it, and therefore ought to have this Exhortation read to them, according to the Order of the Church. Whereby she hath sufficiently demonstrated, that she doth not think it enough for People generally to receive it only *three* times in a Year; but that it is her Opinion, that they ought, and her hearty Desire they would receive it as often as it is, or according to her Order, ought to be administered among them.

But then she wisely considers withall, that being a national Church made up of all Sorts of Persons, it is necessary that her general *Rules* and *Orders* should be accommodated, as much as possible, to the several Conditions and Circumstances that many of them may be sometimes in. And therefore, although she exhorts all her Members to *frequent* and *constant* Communion, yet she doth not think
fit

fit to command, and oblige them all under the Pain of *Excommunication*, to receive oft'ner than three times a Year, lest some might be thereby tempted to come sometimes without that Preparation and Disposition of Mind that is requisite to the worthy partaking of so great a *Mystery*. I say under Pain of *Excommunication*: For that is the Meaning and the Effect of the Law that they who do not communicate at least three times in a Year, may, and ought to be cast out of the Communion of Christ's Church, as no longer to be called Christians, seeing they live in such a gross Neglect of Christ's own Command, and of that Duty whereby Christians are in an especial Manner distinguish'd, from other Men. As *Jews, Turks, and Heathens* may *fast and pray*, and hear *Sermons* in their Way: But to receive the Sacrament of *Christ's Supper*, is proper and peculiar only to Christians, or such as profess that Religion which *Jesus Christ* hath settled in the World. And therefore they who receive the *Sacrament*, do thereby manifest themselves to be Christians. They who do it not, make it at least doubtful whether they be Christians or no; for although they were baptized, and so made Christians once, who knows whether they have not renounced their Baptism and apostatiz'd from the Christian Religion? They themselves perhaps may profess they have not; but the Church can never know it, but has just Cause to suspect the contrary, so long as they refuse to renew the Vow they made in the *Sacrament of Baptism*, by receiving that of the *Lord's Supper*. And the least that can be required of them for that Purpose, is to do it *three times a Year*,

The receiving this Sacrament so often as the Church requires, the best characteristick of a Disciple of Christ.

Year, which therefore the Church absolutely requires: Not that it is not necessary for them to receive it *oft'ner*, in order to their Salvation; but because it is necessary that they should do it at least *so often*, that the Church may be satisfied that they continue in their Communion, and constant to that Religion wherein Salvation may be had.

And hence it is, that in the Rule itself, it is not said that *every Person*, but *every Parishioner*, shall communicate at the least *Three* times in the Year; which therefore is required of all, not as they are Members only of the *Catholick*, but as they are Members of a *Parochial Church*; and they are bound by this Law to do it at least so often in their own *Parish Church*, where they are *Parishioners*: Otherwise they do not do it as *Parishioners*, as the Law requires. So that although a Man communicates an hundred times in any other Place; as in the *Cathedral*, which is free to all of the Diocese, or in a Chapel of Ease, or in any other Church when he can have it at his own, this doth not satisfy the Law. But he must communicate at least *Three* times in the Year, as a Parishioner in his own *Parish Church*, where there are Officers called Church-Wardens, appointed on purpose to take Notice of it, and to inform the Church against him, if he neglects to do it so often as she requires. That she may use the most effectual Means to bring him to Repentance for his Sin, and to make him more careful for the future to perform so great and necessary a Duty as this is; or if he continue obstinate, cut him off from the Body of Christ, as no longer worthy to be called a Member of it.

And

And therefore all that can be reasonably inferred from this Law, is, that the *Church* doth not think them fit to communicate at all, who will not communicate at least *Three* times in the Year. But as for her Opinion of the *Necessity* of communicating oft'ner, in order to Mens obtaining Eternal Salvation by the Blood of Christ, that she hath sufficiently declared, by the great Care she hath taken, to have this *Holy Sacrament* administered, constantly, as often as it was in the *Apostles* and *Primitive*

The Want of a sufficient Number of Communicants, the only Reason to justify the Omission of frequent Communion, i. e. daily, or weekly at least.

Time of Christianity; that is as often as any Christian can desire to have it. For according to the Order and Discipline of our Church, if a sufficient Number of *Parishioners*, against whom there is no just Exception, desire to receive it every *Sunday*, or every Day in the Year, the Minister of their *Parish* not only may, but, as I humbly conceive, is bound to consecrate and administer it to them. The want of such a number being, as far as I can perceive, the only reason that can ever justify the Omission of it.

I have endeavoured to set this Matter in as clear a Light as I could, because it will discover to us several things very observable concerning the *Church* we live in.

An Eulogy of the Church of England, in Behalf of this Doctrine.

For hereby we see how exactly she follows the Pattern of the *Primitive* and *Apostolick Church* in this Particular, as well as others: What great care she hath taken, that the Bread and Water of Life may be duly distributed to all her Members whensoever they hunger and thirst after it. With how great Prudence she hath so order'd it, that

that all may have it *as often* as they will, and yet none compell'd to receive it oft'ner than it is absolutely *necessary*, in order to their manifesting themselves to continue in the Faith of *Christ*. How desirous she is that all would receive it *constantly*, and yet how carefull that none may receive it *unworthily*. How uniform she hath been in her Orders about it all along ; and by consequence what cause we all have to bleis G o d, that we live in the *Communion* of such a *Church* ; and how much it behoves us to receive the Holy Communion of her ; not only *as often* as she strictly commands all to receive it under Pain of Excommunication ; but as often as she adviseth and exhorteth us to do it in order to our eternal Salvation, and as she is ready and desirous to communicate it to us. And then we should be sure to receive it *as often* as we are bound, either in Duty to G o d, or by our own Interest to do it.

Another Reason why many do not oft'ner eat
 II. Unworthiness this Bread and drink this Cup, is because, as they pretend, they dare not for fear of sinning against G o d, and incurring eternal Damnation by it. For the Apostles in this very Place saith, ' Whosoever shall eat this Bread, and drink
 ' this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, v. 27.
 ' And he that eateth and drinketh unworthily ;
 ' eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not
 ' discerning the Lord's Body, v. 29. But they cannot but acknowledge themselves to be unworthy of it, and if they should do it often, they might sometimes do it *unworthily*, and so might hazard their Salvation by it. This is a Mistake
 that

that many have lain under ; and therefore it will be worth our while to lay it as open as we can, that People may see into the *Vanity* and *Falsbood* of it.

First, therefore, if there be any Force in this Argument against frequent Communion, it holds as well against ever communicating at all. For if every *unworthy* Person that presumes to eat

Examination of this second Objection against frequent Communion.

this Bread, and drink this Cup, and every one that does it any way *unworthily*, is thereby render'd obnoxious to eternal Damnation, then all would be so that ever eat and drink it at all ; forasmuch as no Man is worthy of any, much less of so great a Mercy as that is ; neither can any Man do any, much less so great a Work as that is, every way so exactly as he ought. And therefore no Man, according to this Opinion, can ever obey this Command of his Saviour, without running the Hazard of losing his Salvation by it : Which is such a groundless and vain Conceit, that I wonder how it first came into any Man's Head. For it is the same as to imagine that he who came into the World on purpose to save us, should require us to do that in order to our Salvation, which we can never do without being damned. Which is so absurd, that whatsoever is, this be sure cannot be the *Apostle's* Meaning in those Words.

Neither indeed can the Words themselves bear any such Sense, without plain Force and Violence put upon them. For the *Apostle* doth not here speak of the *Unworthiness* of the Person, but of the Action. He doth not

Raised from the Context.

say, If any *unworthy* Person shall eat this Bread,

T

and

and drink this Cup: For all are *unworthy*, and they usually the most, who think themselves the least, and they least who think themselves the most *unworthy*. But he saith, *He that eateth or drinketh unworthily*, or after an *unworthy* Manner, unbecoming so great and sacred a Duty as that is. And what this *unworthy* Manner of receiving the Holy Sacrament was which he here speaks of, appears plainly from the *Context*. He is here reproving the *Corinthians* for some Disorders that were *unworthy* receiving among them, and particularly in the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*. For first of all, saith he, 'when ye come together in the Church, ' I hear that there be Divisions among you, and I ' partly believe it, v. 18. It seems there were ' Divisions among them, not only in other Places, but in the *Church* itself; not at other Times only, but likewise when they were receiving the *Holy Communion* itself: And then he adds, ' When ye ' come together therefore into one place, this is not ' to eat the Lord's Supper: For in eating every ' one taketh before *other* his own Supper, and one ' is hungry, and another is drunken. What, have ' ye not Houses to eat and drink in? Or despise ye ' the Church of GOD, and shame them that ' have not, or are poor? v. 20, 21, 22. Where we may observe, that they *came together*, as I have observed before, to eat the *Lord's Supper*, that was the End, as they pretended, of their Meeting; but as they ordered the Business, they did not do it; they did not *eat the Lord's Supper*, but their own. Some eat but little, so as to be still *hungry*; others eat or drank so much as to be *drunken*, and that in the *Church* itself. For that they eat their own Sup-
per

per there, appears from the *Apostle's* calling it their *own*, and not the *Lord's Supper*; and also from his saying in the next Verse: 'What, have ye not Houses to eat and drink in, or despise ye the Church of GOD, making as if that was but like one of your *own* Houses where ye *eat* and *drink* every Day? And lastly, from the Direction he afterwards gives them how to amend this Fault, saying, 'Wherefore, my Brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another: And if any Man hunger, let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation, or *Judgment*, v. 33, 34. This therefore is the thing which the *Apostle* here condemns. They had got, it seems, a *wicked* Custom among them to bring their own ordinary Food to the *Church*, and to *eat* and *drink* it there. And because they did it in the Church, they looked upon it as the *Lord's Supper*: or at least, eat that there no otherwise than they us'd to *eat* their *own* at home; without shewing any respect to Christ's Mystical *Body* and *Blood*, or making any difference between his Supper and their own; but only that they eat the one in the *Church*, and the other at their own Houses. which was a great Mistake and Fault: For which the *Apostle* meekly reproves them, saying. 'What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not, v. 22. And then he gives them the reason why he could not *praise*, but blame them for it; even because the *Lord's Supper* was Instituted by the *Lord Christ* himself, to keep up the *Remembrance* of himself in the Church, to their *Ignorance* of which he in great Charity imputes their Fault. Not doubting but that if they had known the *Nature* and *End* of that

Holy Sacrament, they would have set a greater Value upon it; and therefore perceiving that they did not rightly understand what he had before delivered to them about it, he fully declares it again to them, saying, 'For I have received of the Lord, &c. v. 23, 24, 25. After which, having acquainted them in my *Text*, how this is done in *Remembrance of Christ*, even by shewing forth his Death, he draws this Inference from it; wherefore, 'whosoever
' shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord
' unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood
' of the Lord, v. 27. Which therefore must needs be understood of that *unworthy* Manner of doing it, which he before spoke of, and which gave him the Occasion of saying it, even their 'eating this Bread, 'and drinking this Cup of the Lord, after the same Manner as they eat and drink at home, without expressing any Reverence to the *Holy Sacrament*, or to *Christ's Body and Blood* there represented. And therefore he saith, That 'whosoever doth so, is
' guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord; that is, he is guilty of profaning of *Christ's* Mystical Body and Blood, crucifying, as it were, to himself, 'the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open Shame, *Heb. vi. 6.* by *eating* his Body, and *drinking* his Blood as *common* things, and so exposing him to Contempt and Scorn. That this is the true

Where the Word
Damnation signifies
temporal Judgments,
not Eternal
Damnation.

Meaning of the Phrase, appears also from the next *Verse* but one, where it occurs again: 'For he that eateth
' and drinketh unworthily, eateth
' and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body, v. 29. Not discerning; that is, not considering whose Body it is; nor making
any

any Difference between that and their ordinary Food. As the original Greek Word plainly imports. This therefore is that unworthy receiving which the *Apostle* here particularly condemneth; when Men come to the *Lord's Table*, and receive the outward Signs of *Bread* and *Wine*, without discerning by Faith the Lord's Body signified by them; and therefore without shewing any more Regard and Reverence to what they eat and drink there, than they do to any other Meat and drink. Which horrid Sin, altho' the Corinthians fell into it before they fully understood the *Nature* and *End* of Christ's Institution; yet I hope few are guilty of it among us, now that the Institution of this Holy Sacrament is so clearly delivered and explained by the *Apostle* in this Place. They seem to come nearest to it, who sit at the *Lord's Table* as they do at their own; and receive Christ's Body and Blood with no more Reverence and godly Fear, than they eat and drink at home.

But that which has frightened People most from this Sacrament, is the *Apostle's* saying according to our Translation, 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself. And I confess, at first Sight it looks very frightfully. For it seems to imply, that whosoever receiveth the Holy Sacrament after any unworthy Manner, or any otherways than he ought, is, in fact, damned, or adjudged to *Eternal Punishments* for it. Which, if true, would discourage all considering Persons from ever receiving at all, unless they have greater Assurance of their own *Worthiness* and Abilities, than can reasonably be expected in this Life, or justly pretended to by any that know themselves.

But

But our Comfort is, this cannot possibly be the Meaning of the Words. For, besides, that no Man can receive it so worthily as he ought, and every unworthy receiving as I have shewn, is not that which the *Apostle* here speaks of: Besides that, I say, the Greek Word, which is translated *Damnation* in the *Text*, in the Margin of our Bibles is rendered *Judgment*. Which shews that our Translators themselves were not satisfied that the Word here signified *Damnation*, but that it might be taken in the other Sense. But howsoever they put *Damnation* into the *Text*, to make People, I suppose the more careful how they received; not foreseeing that ill Uses might be made of it: And accordingly have been so in our Age. Wherein thro' the *Ignorance* or *Indiscretion* of some Persons, this one Word hath kept more People from the Holy Communion, than all the Commandments for it, can bring to it. Not in it self, or from its own proper Meaning; but by Reason of the harsh Sound it makes in our Ears, who commonly use it for *Damnation* to *Eternal* Punishments; whereas it may be applied as well to those which are only *Temporal*. And it must be here. The original Greek Word signifies *Judgment* in general: Whereby a Man is adjudged to any Sort of Punishment. But what that is in particular must be determined from the Circumstances of the Place where it is used. As in this Place, the *Apostle* himself plainly shews what kind of *Judgment* or *Damnation* he means by it. For having said, 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *Damnation, or Judgment*, to himself; he immediately adds, For this Cause many are weak and sickly
' among

‘ among you, and many sleep, v. 20.’ From whence it is easy to suppose, that some *Epidemical* Distemper at that Time raged at Corinth, particularly among the Christians, of which many died; and others, tho’ they escap’d Death, yet continued *weak* and sickly for some Time after. This the *Apostle* ascribes to the *Judgment* of God upon them, for their unworthy and profane *eating* and *drinking* Christ’s Mystical Body and Blood, as if it had been common Food. For this cause, saith he, many are weak and sickly among you, &c. And therefore this must needs be the *Judgment* which he here means. But this is so far from *eternal* Damnation, that it is usually inflicted on purpose to prevent that, and that it was so at this Time, appears from what follows: For, saith he, ‘ if we would judge our
‘ selves, we should not be judged. But when we
‘ are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we
‘ should not be condemned with the World, ver.
31, 32. This was the End of that, as it is of all the *Judgments* which God lays upon his People, even to bring them thereby to such a Sight and Sense of their Sins, and to such a hearty and sincere Repentance, that they may not be condemned for them. And therefore when the *Apostle* saith,
‘ He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth
‘ and drinketh Damnation to himself: *and again*
‘ afterwards, If any Man hunger, let him eat at
‘ home, that ye come not together unto Condem-
‘ nation, ver. 34. where the same Word is used again in the *Original*; neither the Etymology, nor common Use of the Word in other Places, much less will the Context here, suffer it to be understood of *eternal* Damnation, but rather of such *temporal*
Judgments,

Judgments, which are design'd by Almighty God to keep us from being condemn'd with the wicked and impenitent World.

Thus we see in short, the whole Scope and Design of the *Apostle* in this remarkable of the *Apostle* Passage concerning the Holy Sacrament. Summed up. From whence we may easily observe, that all that can be reasonably inferr'd from what he here saith, is, That as it is a Sin not to pray, or fast, or give Alms, or hear God's Word aright, so it is a Sin too not to receive the Lord's Supper aright, or as we ought to do it. But as we must *take heed how we hear*, *Luke. viii. 18.* so we must take heed how we *receive*, that we may do it with that *Faith* and *Reverence* which becomes so divine an *Institution*, and so Heavenly a Duty as that is, least otherwise we offend God, and provoke him to lay some heavy *Judgment* upon us; and except we repent, condemn us at last to everlasting Fire, as he justly may for any Sin that we stand guilty of before him. But it is a great Affront and Abuse put upon God's Holy Word, to make this an Excuse for our not *frequenting the Holy Communion*, when the *Apostle* designed it only for an Argument, why we should *receive* it always in a *worthy* and *decent* Manner. And therefore this is the great and only Use we should make of it, that seeing 'He that
' eateth this Bread, and drinketh this Cup of the
' Lord unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damna-
' tion to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body,
' therefore, as oft as we eat this Bread, and drink
' this Cup, we must take care to do it worthily, discerning the Lord's Body, and deporting ourselves accordingly in receiving of it. Whensoever we are
invited

invited to this Spiritual Wedding, we must be sure to come ; but we must be sure to come with our *Wedding Garment on*, with such a Temper and Disposition of Mind, as becomes the Place, the Company, and the Feast we go to. For which Purpose we must prepare ourselves before hand, and put our Hearts into such a Frame, that we may so feed upon the blessed *Body* and Blood of Christ our Saviour, that he may preserve both our Souls and Bodies to eternal Life. But then you will say perhaps, this requires a great deal of Time, more than we can often spare from our necessary Employments.

And that is the Reason that we do not receive so often as we otherways would. And I believe so too. That is the Reason, the great Reason of all, that this Holy Sacrament is so shamefully neglected by most People ! They know it is a

III. Want of Leisure the great Reason why Men do not often communicate.

very good Thing, and they would oft'ner partake of it, but that they have other Business of greater Consequence, as they wisely think, to Mind ; so that they cannot find *time* enough to prepare themselves as they ought for it. As in the Parable, When a certain Man had made a great Supper, and sent his Servants to call those which he had invited to it, they all presently began to make Excuse, ' The first said to him, I have bought a Piece of Ground, and I must needs go and see it ; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five Yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them ; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come,' *Luke xiv. 18, 19, 20.* So it is to this Day. Christ the eternal Son

of God, at the Expence of his own Blood hath provided a Supper, his own last Supper, the best Feast that can be had on this side Heaven; and all things being ready, he sends his Ministers to invite all that are admitted into his Church, to come and partake of it. But they all, or at least, the far greatest Part, desire to be excused. And if we would know the Reason, it is because they have other Business to do: One hath his Farm to look after, another his Shop, a third his Warehouse and Merchandize. And so every one finds something or other to do: Any thing rather than come to the Lord's Supper. But these are but vain Excuses, like those in the Parable, designed on Purpose to shew the Folly of those which made them. 'The first had bought a Piece of Ground, and must needs go and see it:' Wherein he betray'd his Folly, in buying that which he had not seen. And so did the second, in buying *five Yoke of Oxen*, before he had proved them, to know whether they were fit for his Turn. But the greatest Fool of all was the last, who said, 'I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come:' As if his marrying a Wife could hinder him from coming to a Feast. Such are the Excuses that Men commonly make for their not coming when they are invited to our *Lord's Table*: They serve only to discover the Weakness and Folly of those which make them. For how can a Man betray the Weakness of Judgment more, than by preferring the most inconsiderable, before the most valuable Things that are? Yet this is the Case of all who at any Time neglect the Holy Communion for any worldly Business. They prefer their Bodies before
their

their Souls, the World before their Saviour: Earth, with all its Vanities and Troubles, before Heaven, and all the Glory he is there preparing for all those who keep his Commandments. For otherwise they would never suffer any thing in this World to hinder them from doing what he hath commanded, for their more effectual obtaining *eternal Salvation* by him.

But this being the most common Objection against frequent Communion, let us ^{This Reason} look a little more narrowly into it, ^{canvassed.}

that we may see what cause Men have to make it.

First, Some have none at all: Yea, there are many such: Many who are not incumbred with the Affairs of this Life, having a sufficient Maintenance transmitted to them from their Ancestors, or else acquired already by GOD's ^{Some have no Cause} Blessings upon their own Endeavours, ^{to make it.}

whereby they are able to support themselves & their Families, without taking any farther Care about it.

I do not question but there are many such here present at this Time. Now what can you plead for your not frequenting the Holy Sacrament?

You cannot say, ye have not Time to prepare yourselves; For you have more upon your Hands than you know well what to do with. And there-

fore are often forced to invent Ways how to spend it, which usually are as bad as to sit still and do no-

thing. And is it not a sad thing; that you should chuse to do nothing, or worse than nothing, rather

than that which God himself set you, and hath given you so much Time, on purpose that nothing might

divert you from it? Remember, the Time will come, when Time will be no more: And then

you will wish with all your Hearts, that you had

employed it better while you had it. And I am sure there is no way possible for you to make better Advantage of it, than by spending it in preparing yourselves for the Holy Communion, and then receiving it accordingly. This being the best Course you can ever take, for your employing not only that, but all the rest of your Time well. Whereas if you still continue to neglect so great a Duty, notwithstanding that you have little or nothing else to do in the mean while: For my Part I know not how you can answer it either to God or your own Consciences; nor what Account you can ever give of yourselves, or of your Time, at the Last Day. But this I know, that you have but too much Cause to suspect, and fear that all is not right within you: That whatsoever your Temporal Estate may seem, your Spiritual is very bad: And that all the Ease and Plenty which you now enjoy, will hereafter serve to no other Purpose than to encrease your Pain and Misery.

But there are others, who really have a great Deal of Worldly Business upon their Hands, more perhaps than they can well turn them to. But I would desire such to consider, that the worldly Business they have, it is still but the Business of this World, this transient and uncertain World that soon passeth away: That they have another World to live in as well as this; a World that will have no End. And if they take so much Care and Pains about their living a few Years, or perhaps a few Days upon Earth, they ought surely to be much more careful how to live Eternally; as they must either in Heaven, or Hell, either in the greatest

Pleasure

Pleasure they can enjoy, or else in the greatest Pain they can endure. The Difference betwixt which Two is so vastly great, that whosoever duly weighs and considers it, must needs be inclined to make it his chief Study and Business in this World, to prepare for the next: 'To seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness' in the first Place as our Saviour himself commands, Mat. vi 33. And he who doth that, will be sure to order all his Temporal Affairs so that they shall never interfere with his Spiritual, but give Place to them upon all Occasions. Although he be diligent and industrious in his Calling, yet if things so fall out that he must either neglect that for a while, or else his daily Prayers, he doth not stand pausing which he had best do; as seeing there is no Comparison at all between them, the one having respect only to this present, the other to his future and Eternal State. And so for the Holy Sacrament, if he have an Opportunity put into his Hands of receiving that, he dares not let it slip upon any worldly Account whatsoever; as knowing that he may get more there, than all this World is worth; and lose more by the Neglect of that, than of any other Opportunity that can be offered him.

This is the Sense and Practice of every wise and good Man in this Case. But as for such, whose Heads, and Hearts, as well as Hands, are so taken up with worldly *Business*, that they cannot or rather will not, spare so much time from that, as to prepare themselves for the Holy Communion, they plainly shew that they prefer the things of this Life, before their Duty to GOD, their Bodies before their Souls, and their Temporal before their Eter-
nal

nal Happiness and Welfare. These are the Men of this World, who have, or at least desire to have, their Portion in this Life, rather than the next. And these are they which St. Paul speaks of, where he saith, ' Many walk, of whom I have told you ' often, and now tell you even weeping, that they ' are Enemies to the Cross of Christ, whose end is ' Destruction, whose God is their Belly, whose ' glory is in their Shame, who mind earthly things, Phil. iii. 18, 19. I wish there were none such among us at this time: If there be, it will be in vain to say much to them, their Hearts being so full of this World, that there is no room left for sober and good Advice. And therefore I shall only desire, that when they are at Leisure they would remember our Saviour's Words, ' What is a Man profited, ' if he shall gain the Whole World, and lose his ' own Soul! Or what shall a Man give in exchange ' for his Soul? Mat. xvi. 26.

But some of those who thus live in a Crowd of Cares for this present Life, may notwithstanding sometimes think of their *future* State, and then they resolve to set upon the Use of these *Means* which God hath appointed for their Salvation, and particularly the greatest of all, the Holy Sacrament, at least when their Hurry of Business is over, which they hope may be in a Week or a Fortnight's Time; but in the mean while they desire to be excus'd.

Let us suppose that you are so resolv'd at present.

On Account of
which 'tis not to
be defer'd.

But are you sure that those Resolutions will hold, and that you will be in the same Mind a Fortnight hence that ye are in now? How do ye know but other *Business*, may come in before that, which may

may distract your Thoughts as much, or more than that ye have now upon you? But above all, What Assurance have ye that ye shall *live* so long? And what if ye should *die*, as ye may, before that time? What do you think will then become of you? If ye cannot fit your selves for the Holy Sacrament, Will ye be fit to die? No surely! If ye be not *prepar'd* to appear before Christ at his *Holy Table*, you will be much less prepared to appear before him at his *Judgment-Seat*, where you will receive your final and irrevocable Sentence from him. And therefore you had need to look about you, and be always ready, as Christ himself requires you to be with his own Mouth, saying, 'Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and Cares of this Life, and so that Day come upon you anawares, *Luke xxi. 34.* Whence you may observe, that he who will be your Judge, hath fore-warned you, that the Cares of this Life will make you as unfit to appear before him, as Surfeiting and Drunkenness itself. And therefore if you have any Care of your Souls, take heed of the Cares of this *Life*, that they hinder you no longer from receiving his most *Blessed Body* and *Blood* as often as ye can; for if they do, they'll much more hinder you from giving a good Account of your selves before his *Tribunal*. But as ye desire to be always ready for *Death* and Judgment, be always ready for that Holy Sacrament, which is the best Preparatory in the World for it. And for that purpose, whensoever ye are invited to our *Lord's Table*, think thus with your selves: I have now an Opportunity put into my Hands of partaking of the *Body*
and

and *Blood* of my ever Blessed Saviour, to *preserve my Body and Soul to everlasting Life*. It is true, I have at this time more than ordinary *Business* upon my Hands; but what is all this World in comparison of everlasting Life and Happiness? And who knows whether I shall ever have such another Opportunity as long as I *live*? Do but I say, think thus, and then let slip any such Opportunity if ye can: For my Part, if ye have any regard for your immortal Souls, I believe it will be very difficult, if not impossible.

But that which deserves most to be considered in

IV. Want of this Case, is the *Preparation* that is due Preparation. necessarily required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper. Concerning which many whole Books have been written, and some so large, that the very reading of them requires more time than a good Christian need spend in the Duty of itself. And this, I believe hath discouraged many from *receiving* the Holy Sacrament so often as they ought, and as they otherwise would. For meeting with such Books as make the *Preparation* to it so *tedious* and *troublesome* that they cannot read and observe all that is there said about it, without laying aside all other Business for a long time together; they are quite disheartned from ever attempting it, but when they can find a time wherein they have nothing else to do; which to those who follow any Calling, as they ought, happens but very rarely: Who therefore very rarely so much as think of it, especially if they chance to meet with such *Books*, as they sometimes may do, which make their *Preparation* so nice and ticklish a thing, that they despair of ever observing all the little Rules which are there laid down; and therefore seldom or never trouble

ble their Heads about it; which shews what great care and caution should be used in treating upon this Subject, least we raise such Scruples and Difficulties in it, which may deter Men from the Holy Sacrament, instead of *preparing* them for it. For my own Part, I do not see but that whatsoever is generally necessary in order to it, may be brought within a small Compass; for it may be all reduced to these few Heads:

What Preparation makes a worthy Communicant.

First, To the receiving the *Lord's Supper* aright, it is necessary that we be rightly instructed in the *Nature* and *End* of it, that we may be able to *discern*, as the Apostle speaks, the *Lord's Body*, or understand the difference between that and our ordinary Food; and so know what we do: Without which it is impossible for us to do it as we ought. But for this purpose we need not run over great Volumes; for we have every thing necessary to be known concerning it, briefly, but fully set down in our Church Catechism; so briefly, that a Child may learn it all; and yet so fully, that the greatest *Scholar* upon Earth need know no more, in order to his *wor- thy receiving* this *Holy Sacrament*. For there we have the End why it was ordain'd, even, 'For the continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the Benefits which we receive thereby. There we have both the Parts of it described and explained to us, that *Bread* and *Wine* which the Lord commanded to be received, is the outward Part or Sign of the Lord's Supper; and that the Inward Part, or thing signified, is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are veri-

1. A right Knowledge of the Nature and End of the Institution.

ly and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper. *There we have also the Benefits whereof we are Partakers thereby, even the strengthening and refreshing our Souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine.* In which few Words we have all things necessary to be known concerning this Holy Sacrament, in order to the *worthy* receiving of it: And they are all so plain and easy, that we cannot suppose that any one who is bred up in the Christian Religion, and is come to the Years of Discretion, can be ignorant of them. And if any be, it is but turning to the *Catechism* in their *Common-Prayer-Book*, and there they may find them. As they may all things else that are requisite for them either to know, or believe, or do, or desire, that they may be saved.

2. A due Examination of ourselves, as to Faith, Repentance and Charity.

In the next Place, as in all our Addresses to Almighty God, so, especially in this, we ought certainly to endeavour all we can to prepare ourselves beforehand for it. For which purpose the Apostle lays down this general Rule, 'Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup, 1 Cor. xi. 28. But he doth not tell us particularly what we should examine ourselves about, because that may be easily gather'd from what he there saith concerning the Sacrament it self, and the Manner of receiving it. But lest we should be mistaken in it, our Church hath taken care to give us particular Directions about it, in the last Words of her *Catechism*, where she tells us, that it is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper, 'To examine themselves whether

‘ther they repent them truly of their former Sins,
‘stedfastly purposing to lead a new Life; have
‘a lively Faith in GOD’s Mercy through Christ,
‘with a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and
‘be in Charity with all Men. Which Words are
so plain, that they cannot be made plainer; and
yet so full, that they contain all that can be truly
and pertinently said on this Subject. If ye read all
the Books that have been written, and all the
Directions that are there given about your Prepara-
tion to the Lord’s Supper, you’ll find a great
many more Words; but all that are to the Pur-
pose, amount to no more than what is here said.
I do not deny but that the reading of such, or a-
ny other Books of Devotions that are written with
that Care and Prudence which the Subject re-
quires, may be a good Help to bring your Mind in-
to a fit Temper and Disposition for the Blessed
Sacrament. But still this is the Sum and Substance
of all that you need to do in order to it, even to
set apart some time beforehand, wherein to exa-
mine yourselves, whether you *truly repent* of your
former Sins, so as stedfastly to purpose for the
future to lead a new Life: Whether you have a
lively Faith in GOD’s Mercies through Christ,
joined with a thankful Remembrance of his Death:
And whether ye be in *Charity with all Men*. And
if upon due Examination ye find, that ye have
such *Repentance*, such *Faith*, and such *Charity* as
this is, which be sure, all true Christians have,
you need not doubt but that you are fit to re-
ceive the Holy Sacrament, and ought accord-
ingly to do it. But that ye may be more fully
assur’d of it, especially at the Time of receiving,

the Church itself is pleased to tell you it in the Exhortation at the same Time, 'saying, Judge
' therefore yourselves, Brethren, that ye be not
' judged of the Lord; Repent you truly for your
' Sins past, have a lively and stedfast Faith in
' Christ our Saviour, amend your Lives, and be
' in perfect Charity with all Men. So shall ye
' be meet Partakers of these Holy Mysteries. And
therefore she afterwards invites all that are so
prepared, *to draw near with Faith*, and to re-
ceive the Holy Sacrament to their Comfort.

This therefore is all that is necessarily required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper. But all this may be easily done by any true Christian. It requires no great Parts, or Learning, nor Time neither for a Man to look into his own Heart, to review his Life, to consider wherein he hath hitherto done amiss, and to resolve by God's Blessing to do so no more, but to endeavour all he can to lead for the future a new and holy Life, as becomes the Gospel of Christ. This is no more than what many do every Day, or at least very often, whether they are to *receive* the Holy Sacrament or no; And so are always ready, whenever they can get an Opportunity to receive it. Especially, if they had been long accustomed to it. For by this Means their *Repentance, Faith, Charity*, and all other Graces, being kept in continual Exercise, and receiving Strength and Nourishment from the Body and Blood of Christ *frequently* communicated unto them; they by degrees grow up into Habit and Custom, so as to be ready upon all Occasions to exert and put forth themselves with Ease and Pleasure. And there
fore

fore such happy Persons need not spend much Time in their *Actual Preparation* for the Holy Communion, as having such an *habitual* Those Qualifications are never wanting to Dispositions habitually good.

Disposition, whereby they are always duly qualified and prepared for it. Insomuch, that if they happen to come into a Place where it is administered, altho' they did not know or think of it before they came, yet they can receive the Benefit and Comfort of it, and bless God for giving them such an Opportunity which they did not look for; but being put into their Hands, they cannot but take hold of it, and improve it to their best Advantage.

These, I confess, may seem to be of the higher Rank of Christians, to which few ascend in the ordinary Way, without more than ordinary Care and *Diligence* in the Use of those *Means*, which by the Grace of God accompanying them, lead up to it. But we must not think, as some have done, that none but such as these should receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: For that was intended for all that *believe* in Christ, and are *baptized* in his Name: Yea, they are all commanded to do this in remembrance of Him, one as well as another; the *Weak* as well as the Strong in Faith. The *Weak*, that they may be Strong; and the Strong, that they may not be *Weak* again, but rather grow *stronger* and *stronger*, 'till they 'come 'unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the ' stature of the fulness of Christ. *Eph. iv. 13.* I know there are many ignorant though perhaps *well-meaning Persons* among us; yea and some who pretend to great *Knowledge* in the *Mysteries* of our Religion,

Religion, who yet think, that none but Great Men and *Eminent Saints* should come to the Holy Sacrament; they who have attained already to such an Excellent and *Divine Temper* of Mind, as to live always above this World, and out of the reach of the Devil and his *Temptations*: But as to others who are conscious to themselves of their *Daily Infirmities*, and are often in danger of being overpowered by one Temptation or other; they must by no means venture upon it. But this is certainly a very great and *dangerous Mistake*, and one of the Devil's Tricks to keep Men off from using the Best Weapons, whereby to resist and conquer him: For all Christ's Disciples are equally bound by his Command to *do this in Remembrance of him*. And all have equally need of it. If any want it more than others, it must be such whose *Faith* is so weak, as not to be able as yet to 'overcome

And both may, 'the World, the Flesh, and the Devil,' but are still wrestling and fighting with these their Spiritual *Enemies*; and therefore have need of all the *Aids* and *Assistance*, which the Captain of our Salvation hath provided in that Case: Of which the receiving of his most Blessed *Body* and Blood was always found to be most powerful and prevalent.

But that it may be so to them, it is necessary that such Persons take Pains in *preparing* themselves for it. They must look back upon their

This Preparation *Lives*, and bring to their remembrance as many as they can of their former *Sins*, especially such as they have been most guilty of, and whereby they have most *offended* and *dishonoured* Almighty God; and must

not

not only abhor and humble themselves for them, but also resolve *never* to commit them any more. They must search *narrowly* into their *own* Hearts, to find out the weakest side, and resolve to set a *stronger* Watch and Guard than they us'd to do about it. They must *bethink* themselves what Sort of *Temptations* they have been most subject to, and *oftenest* overcome by; and must resolve *never* to give way to them any more, but to withstand them with all their Might. They must *consider* what *Place*, what *Company*, what *Employment*, what *Recreation*, or other *Circumstances* of their Life, have expos'd them most to such *Temptations*, and have been the chief *Occasions* of their falling into *Sin*, and must resolve for the future to forsake and avoid them. They must *consult* their *own* Breasts, to know how they have performed their Duties to God, and used the *Means* that he hath *appointed* for their *obtaining* Grace at his Hands; how they fasted and watched; how they have pray'd both in publick and private; how they have read, and heard God's Holy Word; and how they have *received* the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: Whether they have lived in the Neglect of some or other of these necessary Duties, or else performed them in a *careless* and *superficial* Manner; and must resolve to become *constant* and more *heartly* and *sincere* in all and every one of them, than hitherto they have been. They must *examine* themselves whether they be in *Charity*, and in the *Faith*; whether they really believe all the Articles of the *Christian Religion*. and have a sure *Trust* and *Confidence* in *Christ* their Saviour, and in all the Promises which
God

God hath made to *Mankind* in him, and must resolve to *continue* firm and stedfast in the same unto the End. And they must make all these *Holy Resolutions*, not in their *own*, but in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, *believing* and *depending* upon him for *Grace* and *Power* to perform them, so as to live *accordingly* for the future all the rest of their Days. In short, they must call to mind the solemn *Vow* and *Promise* which they made to God, when they were admitted into his Church by the Sacrament of *Baptism*; and must now *renew* and *ratify* the same at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, faithfully *promising* again to him, and *purposing* with themselves by his Assistance, 'to believe and do as they then promised, and 'to continue in the same unto their Lives End.'

They who have thus prepar'd themselves for the Lord's Supper, whensoever it is *administred*, may, and ought most thankfully to receive it, not doubting but they shall *find* Favour and Acceptance with God, and great *Benefit* and *Advantage* to themselves by it, through his *Merits* and *Intercession*, whose *Body* and *Blood* they there receive. And yet all this may be *easily* and *soon* done by *any* of Christ's Disciples; by those of the lowest, as well as of the highest Forms in the School. Yea, it ought to be *often* done by all at other times, as well as when they are to *receive* the *Holy Communion*. It is true, it is in a *particular manner* requisite and necessary, that a Man *examine* himself before he *eat of that Bread*, and *drink of that Cup*; because unless a Man first *knows* the true State of his Soul, he will not know how to make a right Use of what he there receives,

receives, to his Spiritual *Advantage*. The *Sacrament* of Christ's *Body* and *Blood* is an universal Remedy for all the Distempers of our Souls. But except a Man *knows* where his Distemper lies, and what Part is most affected, he can't apply the *Medicine* to it, and so can receive no *Benefit* from it. But howsoever we must not think, that *Self-Examination* is a Duty to be performed only upon that Occasion. For he who never *examines* himself, but only when he is to receive the *Holy Sacrament*, had need to receive it very often, or else he will be a great Stranger to himself, not knowing what Condition he is in, nor what Progress he makes in the Way to Heaven; but rather will have just Cause to suspect he goes backward, and grows worse and worse every Day. And therefore he who is really solicitous about his Future State, as all true Christians be sure are, cannot but often reflect upon himself, and upon his present Condition, although he have not an Opportunity of partaking of Christ's *Body* and *Blood* as yet, to make it better. And if he lives in a Place, as many do, where such Opportunities are seldom to be had, he must, notwithstanding, often call himself to Account, look into the State of his Soul, and settle all his Spiritual Affairs, as solemnly as if he was to receive the *Holy Sacrament* immediately upon it. By this Means he will be always prepared for it, and always longing and thirsting after it, and ready to catch at the next Opportunity he can get of receiving it. And in the mean while he may make a Shift to keep up his Mind in a pretty good Temper, through the

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Grace

Grace and *Mercy* of God ; who knowing that it is not his own Fault that he doth not actually receive the *Holy Sacrament*, will be graciously pleased, as we have good Ground to believe, to make up the want of it some other Way.

But, blessed be God for it, this is not our Case, who may receive the Holy Communion every *Lord's Day* in the Year, and oftener too if we had a mind to it. How happy would some good People think themselves, if they could have such Opportunities as these are ? And how miserable shall we be, if we neglect and slight them ? For my part, I do not see how we shall be able to answer it either to God, or to ourselves another Day. Neither do I know what *Excuse* or *Pretence* any can have for it, besides those which we have now refuted ; except it be this one, which some have made to themselves, even, that they have been several times at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but have not found that Benefit and Comfort from it which they expected, and therefore think it to no purpose for them to receive it oftener than they are oblig'd to do, in order to their continuing in the Communion of the Church.

This I know hath been a great Stumbling-block to many well meaning People, and therefore I shall endeavour to remove it out of the way, as clearly as I can. For which purpose we may first observe, that what God *commands* us to do, we are therefore to do it because he commands it, whether we can get any thing by it or no. Otherwise we do it not for his Sake, but our own : Not in Obedience to his Command,

V. Want of Improvement under the Use of these Means, another objection against frequent Communion.

mand, but in Hopes of Profit and Advantage to ourselves whereby it ceaseth to be a good Work, or any Way acceptable to God, in that we do not respect him, but ourselves, and so prefer ourselves before him in it: As in our present Case, we are commanded by God, our Saviour, to do this in remembrance of Him. Now if we do it only in Expectation of gaining something to ourselves by it, we do not regard, or obey him at all in it: In that we neither do it therefore *because* he commanded it, nor as he commanded it to be done. For he commanded it to be done in *Remembrance of Him*; and so made that, not our Profit, the chief End of his Institution. And therefore although he hath commanded us nothing but what is really for our Good, and that this is so in an high and special Manner, yet we must not make that our End in doing it, but we must *eat this Bread* and *drink this Cup* in *Remembrance of Him*, whether we receive any Benefit from it or no; yea, although we were sure to have none: And so do it in pure and sincere Obedience to his Commandment. Which, whosoever doth, will be sure one time or other to find the Benefit and Comfort of it, though not perhaps at present.

For the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ, received, as it ought to be, with a quick and lively Faith, will most certainly have its desired Effect. But it operates for the most parts upon our Souls, as our ordinary Food doth upon our Bodies, insensibly and by degrees. We eat and drink every Day, and by that Means our Bodies grow to their full Stature, and are then kept up in

How the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ operates upon, and improves us.

Life, Health and Vigour, though we ourselves know not how this is done, nor perhaps take any Notice of it. So it is with this Spiritual Meat and Drink, which GOD hath prepared for our Souls. By eating and drinking frequently of it, we grow by degrees in Grace; and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, and still continue steadfast and active in the true Faith and Fear of GOD; though after all, we may be no Way sensible how this wonderful Effect is wrought in us, but only as we find it to be so by our own Experience. And if we do that, we have no cause to complain that we get nothing by it; for we get more than all the World is worth; being strengthened in the inward Man, and so made more fit for the Service of GOD; more constant in it, and more able to perform it: Or at least are kept from falling back, and preserved from many Sins and Temptations, which otherwise we might be expos'd to: And this surely is enough to make any one that really minds the Good of his Soul, to hunger and thirst after this Bread and Water of Life, and to eat and drink it as often as he can, although he doth not presently feel the happy Effect of it, as some have done, and as he himself some times may, when God seeth it necessary or convenient for him. In the mean while he may rest satisfied in Mind, that he is in the Way that Christ hath made to Heaven; and thank GOD for giving him so many Opportunities of partaking of Christ's Body and Blood, and also Grace to lay hold of them, to improve them to his own unspeakable Comfort, such as usually attends the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper: Whereby we are not only put in
mind

mind of the great Sacrifice which the Son of God offer'd for our Sins, but likewise have it actually communicated unto us for our Pardon and Reconciliation to the Almighty Governor of the World, which is the greatest Comfort we can have on this side Heaven; so great that we shall never be able to express it unto others, how deeply soever we may be affected with it in ourselves. And though we be not always thus sensibly cheerful and refreshed with it, as we could wish to be, howsoever we can never receive the blessed Sacrament, but we have the Pleasure and Satisfaction of having done our Duty to our Maker and Redeemer, which far exceeds all the Comforts of this Life, and therefore may well stay our Stomachs till GOD sees good to give us more.

But let us now suppose, that a Man hath been often at our Lord's Table, and yet hath seldom or never received any real Benefit or Comfort from it, not so much as that which ariseth from our reflecting upon our having done what our Saviour Commanded us. This, I confess, may be the Case of some Persons. But then such should consider where the Fault lies: It cannot lie in the Institution itself; That can never fail of producing the same Effect, where it is duly observed at one time as well as at another. And therefore the Fault must be in the Persons themselves; they do not duly observe the Institution, and then it is no wonder if they be never the better for it. Now there are two things required to the due Observation of it: First, That Men come rightly prepared to the Holy Sacrament; and then, that they receive it aright. They who
fail

When it has not
that good Effect,
'tis the Fault of the
Man, not of the
Institution.

The Remedy is fail either of these Ways, must blame
at Hand.

themselves if they miss of what they
expected from it. What is necessary to the prepa-

1. Right Pre- ring ourselves for it, I have already
paration. spoken of, and have shewn, that it

is no more than what may be easily done, if Men
will but set themselves in good earnest about it.
But if Men will not do that, but come to the
Lord's Table as they do to their own, without put-
ting themselves by God's Assistance, into a right
Temper and Disposition for it, they have no
Ground to expect any Advantage by it. For they
are not Subjects capable of those Spiritual Profits
and Pleasures which are there exhibited. Their
Hearts are not towards them, but rather bent quite
another Way, and therefore cannot possibly be
touched or affected by them. What wonderful
Power hath the Sun upon Plants and Seeds in the
Earth, to make them grow and bring forth Fruit?
And yet such Plants or Seeds which are rotten,
corrupted, or not rightly set and disposed as they
ought to be, are never the better for the Influences
of the Sun, but remain just as they were, how
long soever it shines upon them. So it is here;
Christ, the Sun of Righteousness shines most pow-
erfully in his Church, especially at the Commemo-
ration of the great Eclipse which he once suffered,
as they find by Experience, who come duly pre-
pared to it, being so quickened, enlivened, actua-
ted and strengthened by it, that they bring forth
Love, Joy, Peace, Long-Suffering, Goodness,
Faith, and all the other Fruits of God's Holy Spirit,
as they are reckoned up by his Apostle, *Gal. v. 22.*
23. Whereas they who are disorder'd and out of
tune,

tune, and will not take Pains to put themselves into a suitable Temper and Disposition for it, they are no way wrought upon, or influenced by it, but still continue barren and unfruitful. And so all must needs do, who come not rightly qualified to the Holy Sacrament, they cannot truly eat of the blessed Body and Blood of Christ; and if they did, they cou'd not digest it into proper Food and Nourishment for their Souls. And so can receive no real Profit and Advantage by it. Which notwithstanding, should not discourage any from coming as oft as they can to the Lord's Table, but should rather excite them to prepare themselves always as well as they can for it. For then they will never complain of Unprofitableness any more. But let them come as often as they please, they will every time go home better than they came, if they do but come thus rightly disposed to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, which is there communicated to them, and then likewise receive it also as they ought.

How they ought to receive it, is the next Question to be considered. And it had *2. Receiving aright* need be considered very seriously by all that expect any Benefit from the Lord's Supper. For altho' they come with never so good a Disposition to it, yet unless they keep themselves in the same while they are at it, and actually partake of Christ's Body and Blood, according to his Holy Institution, their Expectations will be all frustrated. For the great Benefit which we receive from this Holy Sacrament, is the strengthening and refreshing our Souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our Bodies are by Bread and Wine. But as our Bodies

dies cannot be strengthened or refreshed by Bread and Wine, unless we eat and drink it; so neither can our Souls be so by the Body and Blood of Christ, unless we actually partake of it. But our Souls cannot actually partake of the Body and Blood of Christ any other Way, than by some Act of their own; even by acting their Faith in what is there signified and represented to them.

By actual Faith What we there see with our bodily in the Mystery. Eyes, although consecrated to an holy Use, it is still in its own Nature plain Bread and Wine, which may strengthen and refresh our Bodies, but can have no such Influence or Effect upon our Souls, as being of a quite different Nature from them. But by Faith we look upon them as the Signs and Symptoms of Christ's Body and Blood, and receive them as such upon his Word; which, as I have shewn, is a mighty strengthening and refreshing to our Souls. But we can never thus receive Christ's Body and Blood nor so much as discern it any other Way, but by a quick and lively Faith; but that, as the Apostle saith, 'is the Substance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not seen,' *Heb. xi. 1.* The Body and Blood of Christ is not seen in the Holy Sacrament, but Faith doth plainly evidence; yea, itself is the Evidence of it to us. So that by Faith I am as fully persuaded of it, as if I saw it. And although we do not see it there, yet we hope for it, because of Christ's Word; and what we thus hope for, our Faith is the Substance of it to us, causing it to subsist and operate in us effectually to all Intents and Purposes, as we can expect or desire, for the strengthening and

and refreshing of our Souls. Whereas without such a *Faith* as this, we can receive nothing but *Bread* and *Wine*, and by consequence no Spiritual Benefit or Comfort at all from the *Holy Sacrament*. And that is the Reason, why according to the Appointment of our Church, at the Distribution of the Sacramental Bread, we say to every Communicant, ‘ Take, and eat this in Remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on ‘ him in thy Heart by Faith;’ whereby every one is put in Mind in the very act of receiving, that he must there feed upon Christ *by Faith*, as the only Means whereby he can partake of his *Body* and *Blood*, so as to receive Strength and Nourishment to his Soul from that Holy Feast.

For indeed the whole *Stress* of this great *Work* lies upon our *Faith*. Unless that be duly exerted and acted, though Men come to the *Lord's Table*, and feed upon the outward Elements, which are there given them, this is not to eat the *Lord's Supper*; for that is a *Spiritual* Banquet, which cannot be so much as tasted of any otherwise than *by Faith*. And therefore they, who do not receive it with *Faith*, have no Cause to complain that they are never the better for *receiving* the *Lord's Supper*; for they do really *receive* it no more, than as if they were not present where it is administred; and so can expect no more Benefit from it, than from Food or Physick which they do not take. But this should not dishearten any from coming to the *Lord's Supper* as often as they can; but should make them more careful to *receive* it always as they ought, with *Faith*; and then they can never fail of their Expectation from

it: But will always receive as much, and often more than they could expect.

By this we may see how we ought to *receive* the *Lord's Supper*; if we desire to partake of the Benefits of it, we must receive it with *Faith*. And hence it is, that *our Church* hath, in her great Wisdom, so contriv'd that incomparable Office which she hath made for the Administration of this *Holy Sacrament*, that from the Beginning to the End of it, there is Matter and Occasion given us, all along, for the Exercise of our *Faith* in Christ, and the Promises which God hath made us in him, that so we may be sure to partake of his most Blessed *Body* and *Blood*, and of all the Merits of his Death, whensoever we meet together for the Celebration of it. Which that I may the better demonstrate, and likewise shew how we should act our *Faith* all the while that we are at our *Lord's Table*, so as to receive Spiritual Strength and Comfort from it; it will not be amiss if we go through the whole *Office*, especially so much of it as is, or ought to be always used when there is a *Communion*, and not at any other Time.

All from the Beginning of the Service to the End of the Prayer, for Christ's *Holy Catholick Church*, is appointed to be read upon *Sundays* and *Holy-days*, although there be no

The Excellency of our Communion Service, for obtaining the End of that Ordinance, exemplified.

Communion: But if there be a *Communion* in the *Church* upon any other Day as well as those, it ought to be read. And therefore it will be expedient to premise something concerning that, at least so much, that we may understand the De-

sign of it, and how it makes Way for our better performing of this great Duty.

This *Service* therefore, being appointed for the *Communion* of the *Body* and *Blood* of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, as it is to be *all*, and *always* read at his Table, by one of his *Ministers*; so it begins with his *Prayer*, the Prayer which he himself compos'd, and left to his Church, as a standing general Form, to be used by all *Persons*, at all *Times*, and upon all *Occasions*; to which it is fitted

In the Use of the Lord's Prayer at the Holy Table.

in such a wonderful Manner, as sufficiently shews both the Author and Intent of it. To this is subjoin'd a short Prayer for this particular Occasion, that God would be pleased 'to cleanse the Thoughts of

The particular Prayer before the Commandments.

'our Hearts, by the Inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his Holy Name, in keeping his *Commandments*, which immediately after are so solemnly repeated in his Name by one of his *Ministers*, standing at his Table, that we may, and ought to hearken to them with the same Attention, Reverence and godly Fear, as if God himself pronounc'd them again to us,

The reading of the Commandments themselves.

as he did to the *Israelites* from Mount *Sinai*, with *Thunderings* and *Lightnings*, and the *Noise* of the *Angelick Trumpets* sounding in our Ears, *Exod. xx. 1, 18*. While we are thus hearkening to these Divine Laws, distinctly published and proclaimed to every one of us in particular, we cannot but every one call to Mind his own *Sins*, whereby he hath offended against these Laws, and how unable he hath been

to keep any one of them as he ought, without the Grace of God, and therefore we have no sooner heard any of them repeated, but we immediately beg of God mercifully to pardon our former *Transgressions* of it, and to give us Grace to observe it for the future, saying after the Repetition of each *Commandment*, from the Bottom of our Hearts, as well as with our Mouths, ' Lord ' have Mercy upon us, and incline our Hearts to ' keep this Law.' All which must needs be acknowledg'd to be of great use to our due *Commemoration* of that Death which the Son of God suffered for these our Sins, and to our partaking of his *Body* and *Blood* for the Pardon of them, and for *Grace* to walk hereafter in all the *Commandments* of the Lord, blameless. For tho' we did examine ourselves *privately* before, and in the special Presence of God himself, openly declaring and making known his Laws particularly unto us, whereby our Sins and Infirmities are brought afresh to our Remembrance, hereby we come to the *Holy Sacrament* with an actual Sense of them upon our Minds, and so are better able to apply the great Remedy which is there prepared for our Ease and Cure. Upon which Account I cannot but admire the *Prudence* as well as *Piety* of our *Church*, in appointing the *Commandments* to be *publickly* read upon this Occasion.

The *Commandments* of Almighty God having been thus solemnly read to us, in Obedience to them we first pray, as we are bound to do in e-

The Collects for
the King, and the
Day.

very distinct Service for his *Vicegerent* upon Earth, and then for *ourselves* and *Brethren* in the *Collect* for

for the Day; which, if it be an *Holy Day*, hath respect to the Blessing we then commemorate, otherwise it is for some special Grace or Mercy that we have all need of.

After this follows the *Epistle*, that is, some Part of those *Epistles* which St. Paul The Epistle. or other *Apostles* wrote by the *Inspiration* of God, wherein we are usually *reminded* of some of those Duties which we heard *before* enjoined us in the *Commandments*, or upon some particular Occasions, some other *Portion* of Scripture relating to that *Occasion*. Then follows the *Gospel*, or some of the Divine *Sayings*, or Acts of our Blessed Saviour, as they are recorded by one of The Gospel read the four *Evangelists*, which never standing. alters. There is never any other *Portion* of Scripture appointed for the *Gospel*, as there is for the *Epistle*. But that is always taken out of the very *Gospel* itself. By which Means we always hear something which *Christ* himself spake with his Divine Mouth, for our Instruction when he was upon Earth: Or else something which he did by his Divine Power for the Confirmation of our Faith in him. Hence it is, that at the Reading of the *Gospel*, the People are all required to *stand up*, not only to shew their *Readiness* to *stand by*, and *defend* it to the last; but likewise to express their Respect and Reverence to *Christ* himself, whose *Gospel* it is, and whose Words and Works they hear *rehearsed*: And therefore must needs stand up to *bearken diligently* to them, as they would have certainly done, if they had been *near* him when he spake or did them. And *hence* also it is, that in the first *Common Prayer Book* which

was

was put out by King *Edward VI.* so soon as the *Minister* had said, *The Holy Gospel is written in such a Chapter*, the People were order'd to say, *Glory be to thee, O Lord*, to testify their *Acknowledgment*, that he, whose *Gospel* they were now to hear, is their Lord and Master, the Great, and Almighty God; that all *Glory* and *Honour* is due to him for revealing this *Gospel* to them, and accordingly to adore and worship him for it. As all should do when they pronounce these Words.

So soon as the *Gospel* is read, the *Nicene Creed* begins; which itself also contains the Sum and *The Nicene Creed* Substance of the *Gospel*; and therefore is appointed to be said or sung by *all the People*, standing in the same Posture as they did in *hearing* of the *Gospel*. And that, I suppose, is the reason why, altho' after the reading of the *Epistle*, the Minister is to say, *Here endeth the Epistle*; yet after the reading of the *Gospel* he is not to say, *Here endeth the Gospel*, (as many, who do not consider the *Rubrick*, are wont to do) because the *Gospel* doth not properly end there, but *continues* to be declared and published in the following *Creed*: In which are briefly comprehended all the great Articles of that *Holy Religion* which Christ hath revealed to us in his *Gospel*: And therefore it ought to be jointly repeated by all the People there present, that all may thereby publickly own and profess their *Belief* of all and every one of those *Articles*, and so of the whole *Gospel* of Christ, in order to their being admitted to the *Holy Communion*: Which otherwise they ought not to be.

After

After this *Creed* there follows one of the *Homilies* or *Sermons* set forth by Authority, or else one compos'd by the *Minister* himself, for the fuller Explication of some Part of the said *Creed*, or else of the *Commandments* before repeated; which therefore comes in very properly in this Place, after the *Summary* of that *Christian Doctrine* according to which all *Sermons* ought to be framed. After *Sermon*, the *Priest* returns to the *Lord's Table*, and then begins the *Offertory*, reading some Sentences of *Holy Scripture* chosen out on Purpose to excite and stir up the People to give, every one according to his Ability, something to pious and charitable Uses. And while these Sentences are in reading, the *Deacons*, *Church-wardens*, or some fit Persons appointed for that Purpose, gather the *Alms* and other *Devotions* of the People, and bring them to the *Priest*, who humbly presents, and placeth them upon the *Lord's Table*, as devoted to him, and then he begins the Prayer for the whole State of Christ's Church Militant here on Earth.

The Homily or Sermon.

The Offertory.

Thus much of the Communion Service, even from the Beginning of it to the End of the afore-said Prayer for Christ's Catholick

Church, is to be said upon *Sundays* or other *Holy Days*, altho' there be

The Prayer for Christ's Church Militant.

no Communion, for want of a sufficient Number to communicate with the *Priest*. In the first Common Prayer Book of King *Edward* the Sixth, it was order'd, that the *Priest*, although there were none to communicate with him, shall say all things at the Altar appointed to be said at the Celebration

tion of the Lord's Supper, until after the Offertory, upon Wednesdays and Fridays, without any mention of Sundays and Holy Days. From whence it appears, that they took it for granted, that there would be always a sufficient Number of Communicants, upon every Sunday and Holy Day at the least; so that they could not so much as suppose there would be no Communion upon any of those Days. But it seems they *feared* that upon other Days there might be sometimes none to communicate with the *Priest*, and so *no* Communion. And therefore order'd, that if it should so happen for a whole Week together, yet nevertheless upon the Wednesdays and Fridays in every Week so much shall be said of the Communion Service as is before limited. But afterwards, as Piety grew colder, the Sacrament began to be more and more neglected, and by Degrees quite laid aside upon the Week-Days. And then the Church did not think it convenient to order any of the Service appointed for it to be read upon any other Days, but only upon Sundays and Holy Days; but upon those Days she still requires that, although there be *no* Communion, yet all shall be said that is ap-

To be read upon Sundays and Holy Days though there are not Communicants enough. pointed at the Communion, until the End of the General Prayer (for the good Estate of the Catholick Church of Christ) together with one or more of the Collects at the End of the Communion Service, concluding with the Blessing.

And verily there is great Reason it should be so. Not only because it is fitting that Devotions should be longer upon those than they are upon other Days: But likewise there are several things particular

particular in that Part of the Service which requires it.

Here are the Commandments of Almighty God the Supreme Lawgiver of the World, which it is requisite that People should hear, and be put in Mind of, at least upon those Days which are dedicated to his Service. Here is the Collect, Epistle and Gospel proper to many Sundays, and to all Holy Days in the Year, without which they could not be distinguished from one another, nor from other Days, nor by Consequence celebrated, so as to answer the End of their Institution, unless they were read upon their proper Days. Here is the Nicene Creed, wherein the Divinity of our Blessed Saviour is asserted and declared, and therefore very proper to be said or sung upon those Days which are kept in Memory of him, and of his Apostles, by whom that Doctrine together with our whole Religion grounded upon it, was planted and propagated in the World. Here is the Offertory and choice Sentences of Scripture, read to stir up People to offer unto God something of what he hath given them, as their Acknowledgment that he gives them all they have, and that they hold it all of him; which howsoever it be now generally neglected, except there be a Communion, yet People ought certainly to be put in Mind of it at least upon all Holy Days, especially upon the Lord's own Day, according to his own Order, written by his Apostle St. Paul, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. Here, among others, is the Prayer for the whole State of Christ's Church Militant here on Earth; and it is but reason that we, as Fellow-Members of the same Body, should join together

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ther in it upon all the great Festivals of the Year, which are generally celebrated by the whole Church we pray for, and by that Means testify our Communion with it. And besides, this, as well as the other Part of the Communion Service, is performed at the Communion Table, the Place where the Primitive Church used to perform its publick Devotions; and ours, which in all Things else is conformable to that, cannot but i-

And to be read at the Communion Table. imitate it in this particular, at least, so far as to have some Part of its Service performed at the same Place upon Sundays and Holy Days, although there be no Communion.

But the main Reason why so much of the Communion Service is ordered to be read upon Sundays and other Holy Days, notwithstanding that there is no Communion, seems to be, that the Church may shew her Readiness to administer it upon these Days, and so that it is not her's nor the Minister's, but the People's Fault, if there be no Communion. For the Minister, by her Order, goes up to the Lord's Table, and there begins the Service appointed for the Communion, and goes on as far as he can, till he come to the actual Celebration of it, and if he stops there, it is only because there are none, or not a sufficient Number of Persons to communicate with him: For if there were, he was bound and is ready to consecrate and administer it to them. And therefore, if there be no Communion upon any Sunday or Holy Day in the Year, the People only are to be blamed, and must answer for it another Day. The Church hath done her Part in ordering it, and the Minister his in observing that Order: And
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if the People would do theirs too, the Holy Communion would be constantly celebrated in every Parish Church in England, every Sunday and Holy Day throughout the Year. Neither can they plead Ignorance in the Case, or say they did not think it their Duty to communicate so often. For every Time they see the Minister go up to the Communion Table, and there read Part of the Service appointed for the Holy Communion, they are put in Mind of their Duty, and upbraided with their Neglect of it. From all which we may observe by the Way, That so the People may be reminded of their Duty, and upbraided with their Neglect of it. how much those Ministers are to be blamed, whoever omit this Part of the Service, or do not perform it at the Place appointed for it. How they can answer it to God, to the Church, to their People, or to themselves, for my Part I know not.

Having thus briefly run over so much of the Communion Service as is to be read when there is no Communion, as well as when there is, we are now come to that Part of it which never is, nor can be used, but only when the Holy Communion is actually administred. And, therefore, is chiefly to be considered in our present Design, in shewing how we may and ought to receive it, so as to find the Benefit and Comfort of it. For which Purpose we may observe, that after the Prayer for Christ's Holy Catholick Church, before-mentioned, the Minister, who is always a Priest, seeing a competent Number of devout Christians ready and desirous to partake of the Body and Blood of our blessed Redeemer, first reads to them, a grave, pious, and patheticall Exhortation, to The Exhortation

consider what they are about to do; of how great Benefit it will be to them, if with true penitent Hearts and a lively Faith, they receive that Holy Sacrament; how dangerous to receive the same unworthily; how they should come to it; what Cause they have to give their most hearty Thanks to the most Holy Trinity, for the Redemption of the World by Jesus Christ, who ordained these Holy Mysteries as Pledges of his Love, and for the continual Remembrance of his Death, to our great and endless Comfort. All which is so clear and affectionately expressed, that it contributes very much to the making up their Defects of their Preparation for it, and to raise their Minds into such an holy and devout Temper, as to be capable both of performing this great Duty aright, and of receiving the Benefits and Comforts of it.

The Exhortation being ended, the Minister (in the Name of Christ and his Church) inviteth all

The Invitation. who are thus Godly disposed, to the Lord's Supper, saying to them, 'Draw near with Faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your Comfort.' He invites them first to draw near, thereby putting them in Mind, that they are now invited into Christ's more special Presence, to sit down with him at his own Table, that so they may be as near to him as they can be in this World; and therefore, as an Emblem thereof, should come from the more remote Parts of the Church, as near to the said Table as they may. But then he adviseth them to draw near with Faith, as without which, all their bodily Approaches will avail them nothing, it being only by Faith that they can really draw near to Christ, and

take

take this Holy Sacrament to their Comfort. And therefore they should take special Notice of this Expression, used on Purpose in this Place, to stir up their pure Minds, by way of Remembrance, to keep their Faith in continual Exercise all the while that they are at our Lord's Table, so as to look upon him as there present with them, observing all the Motions both of their Souls and Bodies, and ready to communicate his own most Blessed Body and Blood unto them, to preserve their Souls and Bodies to everlasting Life. But seeing they cannot act their Faith as they ought in Christ, who died for their Sins; until they have confessed and repented of them; therefore he calls upon them to make their humble Confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon their Knees.

And now all that are to communicate, being prostrate upon their Knees, as so many guilty Malefactors before the Judge of the *The Confession.* World, do in a most humble and solemn Manner jointly acknowledge and bewail the manifold Sins and Wickedness, which they from Time to Time have committed in Thought, Word, and Deed against his divine Majesty: Professing themselves most earnestly to repent of them; humbly beseeching him to pardon what is past, and to grant them Grace for the future to serve and please him in Newness of Life, for Christ Jesus's Sake. All which is done with such apposite and pathetical Words, that I do not see how it is possible for us to express our hearty and sincere Repentance better than we do at that Time.

While

While People continue in this humble Posture, begging for Mercy and Grace at the Hands of *The Absolution* God, his Minister stands up, and in his Name assures them, that he of his infinite Mercy hath promised Forgiveness of Sins to all them, that with hearty Repentance and true Faith turn unto him; and therefore he applies the same Promises to all, and every one there present, praying that Almighty God would accordingly have Mercy upon them, pardon and deliver them from all their Sins, confirm and strengthen them in all Goodness, and bring them to everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And here it is that our Faith must begin to work, as it is the Substance of Things hoped for, or a solid and substantial Confidence that God will give us all the good Things which he hath promised, and therefore hope for at his Hands, so as firmly and stedfastly to believe, that upon our hearty and sincere Repentance, we are now absolved from all our former Sins, and that from this Time forward God will assist us with his Grace, to serve and please him, according to the Prayers we have now put up to him, and the Promises which he hath made to us in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: For all the Benefits of Absolution, as pronounced by the Minister, depends wholly upon this, our believing in the Promises and Word of God, upon which it is grounded.

Which therefore that we may do, the Minister presently reads some select Sentences of the Holy *The Sentences*. Scriptures, wherein God hath promised or declared his Willingness to pardon and absolve us from our Sins, in the Blood of his Son, that

that so we may act our Faith accordingly upon them. And therefore he calls upon the People to hear, and to take special Notice of them.

As first, those comfortable Words which our Saviour saith to all that truly turn to him, 'Come unto me all that travel, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you,' Mat. xi. 28. Which Words contain so firm and solid a Foundation, whereupon to build our most Holy Faith, that if we be but truly penitent, we cannot doubt of God's Mercy to us. For here his only Son, with his own Divine Mouth, invites all that are so, to come to him, promising or engaging his Word, that he will refresh them: He'll give them Peace in their Minds, Quiet in their Consciences, Rest to their Souls. He'll take Care that they shall neither travel nor be heavy laden any longer, with the Burden of their Sins; for he will refresh them with the Sense of God's Mercy, in the Pardon of all their Faults, and with the Assistance of his Grace, in the mortifying of all their Lusts. 'Sin shall no longer have Dominion over them, because they are not now under the Law, but under his Grace,' Rom. vi. 14.

Now these being the Words of Christ, of Truth itself, we may, and ought to have a sure Trust and Confidence on them, so as to be fully persuaded in our Minds, that we being in the Number of those whom he calls, and having obeyed his Call in coming to him, he, according to his Word, will ease us of our Sins, and give us Rest; especially considering that he himself assures us also with his own Mouth, that 'God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son to the
' End

‘ End that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life,’ *John* iii. 16. which Words containing the Substance of the Design of the whole Gospel, pronounc’d by Christ himself, are therefore read in the next Place, that we might have occasion to exercise our Faith in all of it, and so have no Place left for Diffidence or Doubting. For, seeing the great Reason that mov’d God to send his Son, was his infinite Love to Mankind; and the only End why he did it, was, ‘ That all who believe in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life :’ What can we desire more, to excite and confirm our Faith in him? For, ‘ he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things,’ *Rom.* viii. 32.

But lest the Sense of our former Sins should be apt to make us despond or despair of Mercy, that nothing may be wanting to compleat and strengthen our Faith at this Time, there are two other Divine Sentences read, the one of *St. Paul*, saying, ‘ This is a true saying, and worthy of all Men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save Sinners,’ *1 Tim.* i. 15. And the other of *St. John* : ‘ If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins,’ *1 John* ii. 1. Whereby we are given to understand and believe, that Christ came into the World on Purpose to save such Sinners as we are; that he was made a Propitiation for our Sins, by undergoing all the Punishments that are due unto us for them; and that he is now our Advocate in Heaven, always interceding for us, and ready to apply

apply the Merits of his Death unto us. At the hearing of which our Faith hath so much Ground and Matter to work upon, that we may well say with St. *Paul*, 'who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is GOD that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right Hand of GOD, who also maketh Intercession for us,' *Rom. viii. 33.*

Having thus exercised our Faith, and so got above this World, we are now ready to go into the other, and to join with the glorified Saints and Angels in praising and adoring that God, who hath done so great things for us; which that we may the better do, the Minister calls upon us to lift up our Hearts, to lift them up as high as we can, by a quick and lively Faith in the most High God, the Supreme Governor of the whole World. Which being now ready to do, we immediately answer, we lift them up unto the Lord. And our Hearts being now all lift up together, and so in a right Posture to celebrate the high The Lauds and Praises of God, the Minister invites Anthems.

all to join with him in doing it, so as at the same time to believe that he is our Lord, and our God, saying, let us give Thanks unto our Lord God. Which the People having consented to, and approv'd of, by saying, it is meet and right so to do; he turns himself to the Lord's Table, and acknowledgeth to his Divine Majesty, there specially present, that it is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we should at all Times, and in all Places, give Thanks to him. And then the Minister looking upon himself, and the rest of

the Communicants, as Members of the Church triumphant, and all apprehending themselves by Faith, as in the midst of that blessed Society, we join with them in singing forth the Praises of the most high God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, saying, 'therefore with Angels, and Arch-angels, and with all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High.'

And certainly, if ever our Souls be in Heaven while our Bodies are upon Earth, it must be in the singing of this Heavenly Anthem, when our Spirits, with those of just Men made perfect, yea, with the whole Company of Heaven, in so solemn and seraphick a Manner, adore and magnify the Eternal God, our Maker and Redeemer. Especially when we celebrate the Nativity, the Resurrection, and Ascension of our blessed Lord, his Mission of the Holy Ghost, or the most glorious Trinity; for which there are proper Prefaces appointed.

The Preface. pointed to raise up our Hearts as high as possible in praising God for such transcendent Mysteries and Mercies as those are.

Now, if ever, our Minds must needs be duly prepared to receive this Blessed Body and Blood of our dear Lord. And therefore the Minister having first acknowledg'd our Unworthiness of so great a Mercy, and prayed to God to assist with

The Prayer of his own Grace to receive it worthily, he then saith the Prayer of Consecration.

And

And now there is nothing either seen, or said, or done, but what puts us in Mind of something or other, whereupon to employ and exercise our Faith in the highest Manner that we can.

When we see the Bread and Wine set apart for *Consecration*, it minds us of God's Eternal Purpose and determinate Council, to offer up his Son as a *Sacrifice* for the Sins of the World.

The *Minister's* reading the *Prayer of Consecration*, and performing that whole Work alone, none of the People speaking a Word, or any way assisting him in it, may put us in mind how the whole Work of our Salvation was accomplished by Christ alone; no meer Creature contributed any thing at all towards it; and therefore we should believe in him as our only Mediator and Advocate.

When we hear those Words, *Who in the same Night that he was betrayed, took Bread*; we are then by *Faith* to behold our Lord at his last Supper, there instituting this *Sacrament* which we are now to receive, and distributing it to his *Apostles* with his own most Blessed Hands.

When we see the *Bread broken*, we should then call to mind that Grief and Pain, those bitter Agonies and Passions which the Eternal Son of God suffered for our Sins, and in our stead; *how he was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities*; how his Blessed Body was broken, his Hands and Feet fastened to the Cross, with Nails drove through them, and all for our Sins, even for ours.

And so when the *Minister* takes the *Cup* into his Hands, or *pours out* the *Wine*, we are then by *Faith* to behold how fast the *Blood* trickled down

from our dear Lord, our Saviour's Head, when crown'd with Thorns; from his Hands and Feet when nailed to the Cross; from his Side, when pierced with the Spear; and from his whole Body, when he was in his Agony; and all to wash away our Sins: Still believing that it was for our Sins that all this precious Blood was shed: For such and such Sins which we every one know ourselves too guilty of.

When we hear the *Words of Consecration* repeated, as they came from our Lord's own Mouth, 'This is my Body which is given for you, and 'this is my Blood which is shed for you, and for 'many, for the Remission of Sins:' We are then stedfastly to believe, that altho' the Substance of the *Bread and Wine* still remain, yet now it is not *common* Bread and Wine, as to it's Use; but the *Body and Blood* of Christ in that *Sacramental* Sense, wherein he spake the Words: 'Inasmuch that 'whosoever duly receives these his Creatures of 'Bread and Wine, according to Christ's Holy Institution, in Remembrance of his Death and 'Passion, are partakers of his most precious Body 'and Blood;' as it is expressed in the Prayer of Consecration.

When we see the Minister *distributing* the *Sacramental Bread and Wine* to the several Communicants, we are then by *Faith* to look upon our Lord as offering his Blessed Body and Blood and all the Benefits of his Death, to all that will receive them at his Hands; entertaining ourselves, all the while others are receiving, with these or such-like Meditations.

Meditations before the Communion.

BEHOLD the Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of the World! Behold the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, who loved us, and gave himself for us! Who himself bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, and washed us from them in his own Blood. See how willing and ready he is to communicate the Blessings he hath thereby purchased! How desirous that all would partake of them! Methinks I hear him crying out, 'Come unto me all ye that travel, and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.' Methinks I see him yonder going about by his *Minister*, from one to another, and *offering* his most blessed Body and Blood, with all the Merits of his most precious Death, to all that will receive them *faithfully*. Happy, thrice happy are they who do so! They are *absolved* from all their Sins, and accounted righteous before God. They are delivered from the Wrath to come, by the Blood of the Lamb, as the *Israelites* were by that which was typically sprinkled upon the Door-Posts. They are reconciled to the great Creator and Governor of all Things, and are made his Children by Adoption and Grace. They are always safe and secure under his Care and Protection, and never want any thing that is really good for them. They have his *Son* always interceding for them, and his Spirit always abiding with them, to direct and assist them in what they do. 'They are washed, they are sanctified, they are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our GOD, (1. Cor. vi. 11.)' and therefore they will be glorified

glorified with him for ever. O that I might be in the Number of those *Blessed Souls*! When will it once be? When will my Lord and Saviour come to me, that I also may partake of his most Blessed *Body and Blood*! 'My Heart is ready, 'O Lord, my Heart is ready to receive it. My 'Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh also longeth 'after thee. Come *Lord Jesus*, come quickly.'

Thus we may employ our Thoughts while others are receiving; but when it comes to our Turn to receive it, then we are to lay aside all thoughts of Bread and Wine, and Minister, and every thing else that is or can be seen, and fix our Faith, as it is the Evidence of things not seen, wholly and solely upon our *Blessed Saviour*, as offering us his own *Body and Blood* to preserve our *Bodies and Souls* to everlasting Life, which we are therefore to receive by Faith, as it is the Substance of Things hoped for, stedfastly believing it to be as our Saviour said, his *Body and Blood*; which, as our Church teacheth us, 'are verily and indeed 'taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's 'Supper.' By which means whatsoever it is to others, it will be to us, who receive it with such a *Faith*, the *Body and Blood* of Christ our Saviour, the very Substance of Things hoped for, upon the Account of his *Body* that was broken, and his *Blood* that was shed for us.

And the better to excite and assist us in the Ex-

The actual Re. ercise of our Faith, after this Man-
ceiving. ner, at our receiving the Holy Sa-
crament, the Minister at the Distribution of it, first applies the Merits of Christ's Death to each particular Person that receives it, saying to every
one

one singly, and by himself, the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, and the Blood which was shed for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting Life, that so I may apply and appropriate it to myself as the Body and Blood of him that loved me, and gave himself for me, to preserve my Body and my Soul to everlasting Life. And then he adds at the Distribution of the Bread, Take and eat this in Remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy Heart by Faith with Thanksgiving. Whereby I am put in Mind again to eat in Remembrance that Christ died for me in particular, and then am taught how to feed upon him, even in my Heart by Faith, with Thanksgiving in my Heart, because it is not Bodily, but Spiritual Food: By Faith, as the only Means whereby the Heart or Soul can take in its proper Nourishment, and receive the Substance of Things hoped for, even the Body and Blood of Christ; and then it must be with Thanksgiving too, as the necessary consequent of Faith. For as no Man can be truly thankful to Christ, unless he actually believe in him; so no Man can actually believe in him, but he must needs be truly thankful both to, and for him. And therefore at the Distribution of the Cup, after the Words, Drink this in Remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, it is only added, And be thou thankful. Because this necessarily supposeth and implieth our feeding upon him in our Hearts by Faith, as without which it is impossible for us to be truly thankful.

Hence also it is that our Church requires us to receive the Holy Sacrament kneeling, Upon our Knees.
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not out of any Respect to the Creatures of Bread and Wine, but to put us in Mind that Almighty God, our Creator and Redeemer, the only Object of all Religious Worship, is there specially present, offering his own Body and Blood to us, that so we may act our Faith in him, and express our Sense of his Goodness to us, and our Unworthiness of it, in the most humble Posture that we can. And indeed, could the Church be sure that all her Members would receive as they ought, with Faith, she need not command them to receive it kneeling. For they could not do it any other Way. For how can I pray in Faith to Almighty God, to preserve both my Body and Soul to everlasting Life, and not make my Body as well as Soul bow down before him? How can I by Faith behold my Saviour coming to me, and offering me his own Body and Blood, and not fall down and worship him? How can I by Faith lay hold upon the Pardon of my Sins, as there sealed and delivered to me, and receive it any otherwise than upon my Knees? I dare not, I cannot do it! And they who can, have too much Cause to suspect that they do not discern the Lord's Body, and therefore cannot receive it worthily. Be sure our receiving the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ, as the Catholick Church always did, in an humble and adoring Posture, is both an Argument and Excitement of our Faith in him. By it we demonstrate, that we discern the Lord's Body, and believe him to be present with us in a peculiar Sacramental Sense. And by it we excite and stir up both ourselves and others to act our Faith more stedfastly upon him, in that by our adoring him
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we actually acknowledge him to be God as well as Man; and therefore on whom we have all the Reason in the World to believe and trust for our Salvation.

When we have thus Spiritually eaten the Flesh of Christ, and drank his Blood, then we are firmly to believe, and rest fully satisfied in our Minds, that according to his own Word, Christ now dwelleth in us, and we in him, that Christ is one with us, and we with him: And therefore that God hath now sealed to us the Pardon of our Sins in his Blood, and will enable us for the future to walk in Holiness and Righteousness before him all our Days. Which Faith, together with our Thankfulness for so great a Mercy, we ought to exercise all the while that the rest of the Communicants are receiving; not suffering our Thoughts to wander up and down, but keeping them as close up as we can to the Work, still ruminating upon that Spiritual Food which we have eaten, after following, or the like Manner.

Ejaculations and Resolutions after the Communion.

‘ PRAISE thou the Lord O my Soul, and all
‘ that is within me, praise his holy Name.
‘ Praise thou the Lord O my Soul, and forget not
‘ all his Benefits, *Ps.* ciii. 1, 2. Behold, God
‘ is my Salvation, I will trust and not be afraid.
‘ For the LORD *Jehovah* is my Strength and my
‘ Song: He also is become my Salvation,’ *Ija.*
xii. 2. He himself, by the one Oblation of him-
self once offered, hath made a full, perfect, and
sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for
the Sins of the whole World: And he hath now
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given me a Share in it. For he hath communicated unto me that Body and Blood wherewith he did it, and hath assured me thereby of his Favour and Goodness towards me, in the Pardon of all my Sins, and that I am a Member incorporate in his Mystical Body, and an Heir, thro' Hope, of that everlasting Kingdom, which he hath purchased with his own Blood. What shall I render unto the Lord for all these his most inestimable Benefits? I will offer and present myself, my Soul and Body, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto him. I will believe in him, I will trust in him, I will love and honour him with all my Heart and Soul. I will spend the rest of my Days wholly in his Service, and to his Glory. I will order all my Conversation as becometh his Gospel; I will crucify the Flesh; I will resist the Devil; I will keep myself unspotted from the World; I will abstain from all Appearance of Evil, and do all such good Works as he hath prepared for me to walk in. For his Grace shall be sufficient for me; his Strength shall be made perfect in my Weakness; his Power shall rest upon me, his Holy Spirit shall abide continually with me, and in me, to direct, sanctify and govern both my Heart and Body in the ways of his Laws, and in the Works of his Commandments; so that now, through his most mighty Protection, I shall be preserved both in Soul and Body to everlasting Life. Amen. Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power be unto the Lord our God, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Now when all have communicated with the same humble Confidence, we jointly Address ourselves

selves to Almighty God as our Heavenly Father, in that Divine Form of Prayer, which he, whose Body and Blood we have now received, was pleased to compose, and require us to use upon all Occasions. After which, having added another Prayer proper for this great and solemn Occasion, we join together in singing or saying that incomparable Hymn.

The proper Hymn.

GLORY be to God on high, and in Earth Peace,
Good-will towards Men. We praise thee,
we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give Thanks to thee for thy great Glory, O Lord
God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ; O
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that
takest away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon
us. Thou that takest away the Sins of the
World, have Mercy upon us. Thou that takest
away the Sins of the World, receive our Prayer.
Thou that sittest at the Right Hand of God the
Father, have Mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord,
thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art
most high in the Glory of God the Father, *Amen.*

The first Part whereof was sung by the Choir of
Heaven at our *Lord's Nativity*, and the rest added
by the *Primitive*, if not by the *Apostolick Church*,
it being the most *ancient Hymn*, that we know of,
and that which hath been generally used both by
Greek and *Latin Churches* all along, from the Be-
ginning of *Christianity*. And this is the most pro-
per Place for it. Now that our Hearts are strength-

ened and refreshed by the *Body and Blood* of Christ, and so ready to sing and give Praise in the best Manner that we can ever do it upon Earth. But for that Purpose it will be necessary to keep our Minds all the while intent, and our *Faith* still fixed upon God the Father Almighty, and upon his only begotten Son *Jesus Christ*, to whom we here speak in a particular Manner; and therefore shou'd look upon him as specially present with us, hearing what we say to him, and observing how earnestly we beseech him, the *Lamb of God*, the *Son of the Father*, who *taketh away the Sins of the World*, to have Mercy upon us, and how heartily we adore and magnify his Divine Holiness, his absolute Dominion over the whole World, and his, together with the Holy Spirit's, *infinite Height* in the Glory of the Father.

After all which duly performed, having *prayed* for God's Acceptance of what we have done, and The Blessing. for his *Blessing* upon us, we are accordingly dismissed, as well we may, with the *Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*, and with the *Blessing, of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost*, which will most certainly be and remain, with those who thus receive the *Holy Communion*, always.

I have now gone over the whole Communion Service, taking Notice by the Way of such Things only, as are plain and obvious in the several Parts of it. From whence it is easy to observe, that it is all contriv'd so as to set before as continual Matter for our *Faith* to work upon, before, as well as at the receiving of the *Holy Sacrament*; that our *Faith* having been kept so long in Exercise upon our *bles-*
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sed Saviour beforehand, it may be more ready to be fix'd upon him in the actual receiving the *Holy Communion*, so as that we may partake of his most blessed *Body* and *Blood*, which otherwise we cou'd not : For without our *Faith* as it is *impossible to please God*, so it is *impossible to partake of Christ*. And therefore not only *Infidels*, who have no *Faith* at all, but they also who have *Faith*, unless they use it at the *Holy Sacrament*, they can only receive the outward Part, or Sign of the *Lord's Supper* ; they cannot possibly partake of his *Body* and *Blood* signified by it : For that cannot be so much as discerned, much less received any other Way than by *Faith*. And that is the Reason why so many go from the *Holy Sacrament* no better than they came to it : Because, while they are there, they either stare about them, or think of other Things, at least they do not keep their Minds and Faith intent upon the Work they are about. They feed only upon the *Bread* and *Wine* with their Mouths, they do not feed upon Christ in their Hearts by *Faith* ; and therefore cannot possibly receive any *spiritual* Strength or Refreshment from him. Whereas, if whilst they are eating and drinking the outward Element they wou'd at the same Time lift up their Hearts, and fix their Faith upon that which is signified and represented by them, their Souls would be much more strengthened and refreshed by the *Body* and *Blood* of Christ, than their Bodies are by the *Bread* and *Wine*.

From hence it appears, both how little Reason any can have to plead their unprofitableness under it as an Argument

Exhortation to frequent Communion, from the Be-

Sacrament,

Benefit and Comfort
of it.

Sacrament, and likewise how we may receive it, so as to be always the better for it. But for that Purpose it is requisite that we do it often : For the oftner we do it, the more expert we shall be at it, and the more Benefit and Comfort we shall receive from it. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for those who do it only now and then, (as once or twice a Year) ever to do it as they ought : For every time they come to it, they must begin as it were again ; all the Impressions which were made upon their Minds at the last Sacrament, being worn out before the next : And it being a Thing they are not accustomed to, they are as much to seek how to do it now, as if they had never done it before. It is by frequent Acts that Habits are produced. It is by often eating and drinking this Spiritual Food, that we learn how to do it, so as to digest and convert it into proper Nourishment for our Souls. And therefore I do not wonder that they, who do it seldom, never do it as they ought, nor by Consequence get any good by it : I should rather wonder if they did. But let any Man do it often, and always according to the Directions before laid down, and my Life for his, he shall never lose his Labour ; but, whether he perceives it or not, he will grow in Grace, and gather Spiritual Strength every Time more and more.

If such Considerations as these will not prevail upon Men to lay aside their little Excuses for the Neglect of so great a Duty, and to resolve for the future upon the more constant Performance of it, for my Part I know not what will ; and therefore shall say no more, but that I never expect to see
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our Church settled, Primitive Christianity reviv'd, and true Piety and Virtue flourish again among us, till the Holy Communion be oftener celebrated than it hath been of late, in all Places of the Kingdom: And am sure, that if People were but sensible of the great Advantage it would be to them, they would need no other Arguments to persuade them to frequent it as often as they can. For we should soon find, as many have done already, by Experience, that this is the great means appointed by our ever blessed Redeemer, whereby to communicate himself, and all the Merits of his most precious Death and Passion to us, for the Pardon of all our Sins, and for the Purging our Consciences from dead Works to serve the living God. So that by applying ourselves thus constantly unto him, we may receive constant Supplies of Grace and Power from him, to live in his true Faith and Fear all our Days; and by conversing so frequently with him, at his Holy Table upon Earth, we shall be always fit and ready to go to him, and to converse perpetually with him in his Kingdom above, where we shall have no need of Sacraments, but shall see him Face to Face, and adore and praise him for ever; as for all his other Blessings, so particularly for the many Opportunities he hath given us, of partaking of his most blessed Body and Blood.



Private Devotions.

Preparatory to the Sacrament, or on any Days of Humiliation.

I.

O Blessed Jesu! I confess that I have nothing to plead for myself before Thee. I adore and magnify thy Name, that thou vouchsafed'st to suffer for my Sins; but I loath, I abhor myself before Thee, that I have not as yet sufficiently loathed and abhor'd my Sins, for which thou was pleased to suffer. I humbly crave thy Pardon for what is past, and for the future beseech thee to endow me with that Measure of thy Grace and Holy Spirit; that as thou wast pleased to offer up thyself for me, so I may offer up myself wholly unto thee, as I desire to do this Day.

II.

OH! the Breadth, the Length, the Depth, the Height of the Love of God in Jesus Christ my Lord! Who is able to comprehend it? Who can but admire and adore it? That even the Almighty Creator of the World should have so much Love and Pity for me, his sinful Creature upon Earth, as to send his only begotten Son to die, to die upon the Cross, and all for us, and for our Sins, against himself. Ungrateful Wretch that I am! that ever I should commit such Sins against him, which nothing less than the Blood of his beloved Son could expiate? Oh that my Head
were

were Water, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night, and this Day especially, that ever we should be the Occasion that the Son of God should die! And wherefore did he die? To save Sinners? Then he died to save me, the chiefest of all Sinners. Why then should I despair of Salvation, who have got such an all-sufficient Saviour as this is? One who is able to save, to the utmost, all that come to God by him. By him therefore I will go to God; I will believe in him, I will put my whole Trust and Confidence in him, both to be cleansed from my Sins, and justified before God by him.

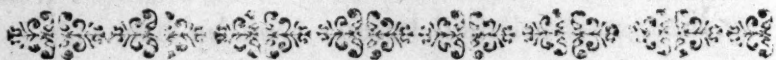
III.

O Blessed Jesu! Who once suffer'd Death upon the Cross, and art now at the right Hand of thy Father in Heaven interceding for us; my Eyes are up to thee, all my Hopes and Expectations are from thee. Send down thy Holy Spirit I beseech thee, into my Heart, to work in me true Repentance, to open mine Eyes, to turn me from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God. Blessed Lord, my Saviour! I know thou hearest me, and believe thou wilt, according to thy Promise, grant my Request; thou wilt give me thy holy Spirit, whereby I shall mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, and walk for the future in all thy Commandments blameless. I can now do all Things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

IV.

DEAR Jesus! Thou Lamb of God, who takest away the Sin of the World! I honour thee,
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thee, I adore thee, I love thee, for that thou first lovedst me, yea, so lovedst me, as to give thyself for me: What shall I render to thee, most loving Saviour, for this thine infinite Love and Kindness to me? I know that thou expectest no more, and I can give no less, than to love thee again. This therefore is that which I now promise, and resolve to do by thy Assistance; beseeching thee to inspire and inflame my Heart every Day more and more with Love to thee above all Things, by that transcendent Love which thou hast, and still art pleased to manifest unto me.



Private Devotions at the Administration of the Holy Communion.

Before going to the Altar.

MOST Gracious Father, thou invitest me, a vile Sinner, unworthy of the least Favour, to a Spiritual Banquet, to a Feast of Love: Lord I am come upon thy gracious Call, being poor and needy, weary and heavy loaden, under the Burden of my Sins; I come unto thee, O Lord, for Relief and rest: Help me to approach these Holy Mysteries with Fear and Reverence, deep Humility, and ardent Devotion; with an Heart full of Faith and sensible of thy infinite Goodness in sending thy Son to die for me, and of his inexpressible Love in undertaking and accomplishing the Work of my Redemption; truly sorry for my manifold Sins, and thoroughly resolved against them; and grant, Holy Father, that hereby
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my Graces may be strengthened, and my Sins destroyed; that I may serve thee sincerely and acceptably all the Days of this mortal Life, and in thy due Time attain thy everlasting Kingdom, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Saviour.

At going to the Altar.

IN the Multitude of thy Mercies, O Lord, do I now approach thy Altar: O pardon my Sins, and receive me graciously. *Amen. Amen.*

At prostrating before the Altar.

THOU art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy Will's Sake they are, and were created: Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanks, and Honour and Power be unto our God, and unto the Lamb for evermore. *Amen.*

Whilst others are coming up, and the Priest preparing to read the Sentences.

ALmighty Lord, who hast of thy infinite Mercies vouchsafed to ordain this Sacrament, for a perpetual Memory of that Blessed Sacrifice, which once thou madest for us upon the Cross; grant me with such due Reverence to participate of this so holy and wonderful a Mystery, that I may be made worthy by thy Grace, to obtain the Virtue and Fruits of the same, with all the Benefits of thy precious Death and Passion, even the Remission of all my Sins, and the Fulness of all

thy Graces, which I beg for thy only Merits, who art my only Saviour, God from everlasting, and World without End. *Amen.*

O Lord, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, regard, we beseech thee, the Devotions of thy humble Servants, who do now celebrate the Memorial which thy Son and our Saviour hath commanded to be made in Remembrance of his most blessed Passion and Sacrifice; that by the Merits and Power thereof, now represented before thy Divine Majesty, we, and all thy whole Church, may be made Partakers of all other the Benefits of his most precious Death and Resurrection from the Earth, and glorious Ascension into Heaven, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, World without End. *Amen.*

BE pleased, O God, to accept this our bounden Duty and Service, and command that the Prayers and Supplications, together with the Remembrance of Christ's Passion, which we do now offer up unto thee, may, by the Ministry of the holy Angels, be brought up into thy heavenly Tabernacle; and that thou, not weighing our Merits, but looking upon the blessed Sacrifice of our Saviour, which was once fully and perfectly made for us all, may'st pardon our Offences, and replenish us with thy Grace and Heavenly Benediction, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

At the Offertory.

Blessed Jesu, who dost accept the poor Widow's two Mites, be pleased graciously to accept this from thy unworthy Servant. *Amen.* *At*

At the Consecration.

O Blessed Jesu, in the Bread broken, I call to Mind thy Body torn with Whips, and Thorns and Nails; and in the Wine poured out, I call to Mind thy precious Blood, shed for my Sins.

Glory be to thee, O Lamb of God that didst offer thyself a Sacrifice, to take away the Sins of the World; Lord have Mercy on me, and take away mine also. *Amen.*

O Lord God, how I receive the Body and Blood of my most blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, the Price of my Redemption, is the very wonder of my Soul! Yet grant me, gracious Lord, so to eat the Flesh of thy Son, and drink his Blood, that my sinful Body may be made clean by his Body, and my Soul washed through his most precious Blood. *Amen.*

When the Priest draws near with the Elements.

Blessed be thy Name, O Lord, that I was born in a Christian Land, and admitted to thy Church by Baptism, and have lived to a Capacity of Sealing my Baptismal Vows in my own Person: Lord, I heartily take those Engagements upon myself: I renounce all Sin, the Works of the Devil, all worldly Vanities, and sensual Lusts: I heartily believe thy Holy Religion, and sincerely profess constantly to endeavour to obey thy Laws; and earnestly implore the Assistance of thy Grace and Spirit, to enable me to keep these Resolutions, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

Immediately

Immediately before receiving the Holy Bread.

Thou hast said, That he that eateth thy Flesh, and drinketh thy Blood, hath eternal Life.

Behold the Servant of the Lord, be it unto me, according to thy Word!

At the eating of the Holy Bread.

By thy crucified Body, deliver me from this Body of Death.

After Receiving.

By thine Agony and Bloody Sweat, by thy Cross and Passion, Good Lord deliver me! I have sworn and am stedfastly purposed to keep thy righteous Judgments.

O hold thou up my going in thy Paths, that my Footsteps slip not.

LORD, I receive this broken Bread, the Representation of thy Body, in Memory of thy wonderful Incarnation, and meritorious Sufferings; and vow by it, that I will by the Grace of God, persist in the stedfast Faith of thy most excellent Religion, and sincere Obedience to thy most Holy Laws to my Life's End. *Amen.*

LORD, I believe, help my Unbelief. I take this Sign of thy Body, as a Token of thy Love, and Seal of thy Promises, to obtain for me the Pardon of my Sins, and the Salvation of my Soul, upon the Terms of Faith, and new Obedience: Lord, I stand to my Part of the Covenant, and in full Assurance of Faith, I rely on thee for the Accomplishment of thine: Be it unto me according to thy Word. *Amen.*

GRANT,

GRANT, O Lord, that this Bread of Life, receiv'd by me in stedfast Faith and humble Thankfulness, may refresh and nourish my Soul, and be an effectual Means of the Growth of my Grace, and Increase of my Comforts, 'till I come to Life everlasting, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

I Believe, O Blessed Jesus, that thou art the Lord of Heaven and Earth; the Prince of Life, and the King of Glory. I most heartily thank thee, that thou wast pleased to stoop so low, as to visit us poor Dust and Ashes, yea, vile and miserable Sinners. Blessed be thy Goodness, which moved thee to do a great deal more; to humble thyself to the Death, even the Death of the Cross, that we might be lifted up to immortal Life. I devote myself everlastingly to thy Love and Obedience: I consent to all thy Holy Gospel, desiring that all the Dwellers upon Earth would praise and serve thee. Let all Nations come and worship before thee: Let all Generations call thee Blessed, and shew forth thy dying Love, while the Sun and Moon endure, to the Glory of God the Father. *Amen. Amen.*

Before receiving the Cup.

LORD, I remember, with all Humility and Gratitude, the Effusion of thy precious Blood for me, and the Atonement made by it: Grant me such a Sense of those Sufferings, as may awaken a due Abhorrence of my Sins; and such an Apprehension of that Propitiation, as may encourage my Addresses to the Throne of Mercy
for

for Pardon and Peace; and quicken my Endeavours in the Ways of Repentance and Holy Living, 'till I obtain the Blessings thou hast purchased by thy Merits, and promised in thy Gospel. *Amen.*

Upon the Approach of the Priest, with the consecrated Cup.

What Reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the Benefits he hath done unto me? I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.

After receiving the Cup.

O My God, thou art true and holy! O my Soul, thou art blessed and happy! O the Depth of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out! Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me praise his Holy Name: Who saveth thy Life from Destruction, and feedeth thee with the Bread of Heaven! Glory be to God on high, and on Earth, Peace, Good Will towards Men. I worship thee, O Lord, and magnify thy Name for ever, who hast vouchsafed to fill my Soul with Gladness, and to feed me with thy heavenly Mysteries of Christ's sacred Body and Blood, humbly beseeching thee, that from henceforth I may walk in good Works, and serve thee in Holiness and Purity of Living, to the Honour of thy Name. *Amen.*

MOST blessed Redeemer, I do truly believe that thy Body was crucified, and thy Blood was shed out of thy Body, as verily as I have received

ved this Bread, and this Wine set apart from the Bread : And that for the Remission of my Sins, as well as any others : And I do also believe, that with this Bread and Wine, I have really and spiritually received thy precious Body and Blood, whereby my Sins are fully washed away, and my Soul purified and refreshed : This, O Lord, I believe help thou my Unbelief. *Amen.*

After receiving in both Kinds.

ALL Glory, and Praise, and Adoration be given to thee, O Lord, for all thy Benefits, especially for thy Son ! For his Life and Death, Resurrection and Ascension ; for his Doctrine and for his Example ; for the Appointment of this memorial Feast ; for thy gracious Invitation of poor Sinners to thy Table ; and for thy admitting me, the unworthiest of them, to partake of thy spiritual Dainties. Let me never forget this Love, or cease to remember this, dear Lord ; but carry the Thoughts of him, and it, into all my Affairs, that they may regulate and direct the Actions of my Life, to the promoting of his Honour, and expressing my Acknowledgment of his Goodness ; that so at last I may partake of his Glory, and enjoy the full Manifestation of his Love, thro' his Merits and Mediation, in his heavenly and everlasting Kingdom. *Amen.*

O Lord, I have now once more, in Confidence of thy gracious Assistance, enter'd into a solemn Resolution against my Sins, to be more watchful over my Ways, and to have more Regard unto thy Laws. I most humbly and penitently implore thy Pardon for my manifold Breaches of such sacred

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Vows ;

Vows; those at Baptism, and others since at thy Table. And now earnestly beseech thee to afford me such Measures of that Grace, which thy Son hath purchased and promised, as may be sufficient to strengthen my natural Weakness, and to overcome my powerful Temptations; that I may serve thee acceptably and faithfully all the Days of my Life, through Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

O Lord, thou hast sealed to me the Covenant of thy Grace, made to me in and thro' thy Son, and assured me of the Forgiveness of my Sins, the Power of thy Grace, the Light of thy Countenance and the Enjoyment of thy Love, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance. Lord, I most submissively praise thy divine Majesty for this Grace, and wonderful Condescension, in entering into Covenant with such a worthless Sinner; I for ever love and adore thy blessed Son, my dear Saviour, for the Merits of his Life and Death, by which he hath satisfied thy Justice, and procured this gracious Covenant. Help me, O Lord, to abound more and more in Acts of devout Praise, and holy Love, and to give constant Heed to the diligent and sincere Performance of those reasonable Conditions which thou hast required, and I have accepted, and engaged to fulfill: That I may obtain the Effects of thy gracious Promises, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

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At the End of the Communion.

TO the King Eternal, the Immortal, Invisible, and only wise God, the ever blessed Trinity, be all Honour and Glory, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

